

No 40.

5 Cents.

# FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF  
BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

## ALMOST A MAN; OR, WINNING HIS WAY TO THE TOP.

*By A SELF-MADE MAN.*



But the man grabbed her by the arm and, raising his umbrella in a threatening manner, cried:  
"I've caught you, you sly minx! Now hand over your wages or—" "Stop!"  
shouted Bob, dashing forward and seizing his uplifted arm.



# Fame and Fortune Weekly

## STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

*Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1906, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C., by Frank Tousey, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.*

No. 40.

NEW YORK, JULY 6, 1906.

Price 5 Cents.

# ALMOST A MAN

OR,

## Winning His Way to the Top

By A SELF-MADE MAN

### CHAPTER I.

#### HOW BOB BAXTER SAVES ELOISE BATES.

There was excitement to burn in Bedford village.

Squire Conrad Drew's pet wildcat, which had the reputation of being a vicious beast, had escaped from its cage and was supposed to be prowling around the neighborhood, to the great dismay of the inhabitants for ten or more miles around.

Several parties had been organized for the purpose of hunting the animal down, but they were handicapped by the squire's express orders that the wildcat must not be shot, but snared and returned to him unharmed, in which case the autocrat of the village announced that he would pay a reward of \$25.

As Squire Drew was a man of considerable property and influence, lived in the most pretentious residence in the village, and was accustomed to make his presence felt in more ways than one, his neighbors and fellow-citizens felt diffident about displeasing him, even in so serious a case as this.

Everybody knew that he prized this particular wildcat highly, even though the animal seemed to be untamable and gave its keeper, the gardener, a deal of trouble.

On account of the ferocious nature of the beast it did seem as if the mogul of Bedford was a bit unreasonable to insist that the wildcat be handled with gloves, as it were, when its continuance at large meant serious injury, if not

a terrible death, to any man, woman or child unfortunate enough to meet it during its wanderings.

The animal had been reported as having been seen at different places on the outskirts, while two farmers wrote the squire that they had found the mangled and half-eaten remains of one of their sheep on the outside of the fold, whereupon the great man had promptly drawn his check in each instance for the value of the loss and mailed it to the agriculturalist.

The hunting parties had taken guns with them to protect themselves against an attack from the animal, but not one of these men would have dared to shoot the cat deliberately except as a very last resort.

Dexter Drew, the autocrat's son, though plentifully supplied with spending money by his father, had an eye on that \$25 reward himself.

So he conferred with several of his cronies, boys who were glad to bask in the sunshine of his favor, and they formed themselves into a party to run the animal down.

Dexter assured them there was no particular danger, but an immense amount of fun in the expedition; but just the same he took his fancy rifle along, while the others had to content themselves with pitchforks and long clubs as weapons.

Dexter had procured a big net with which he meant to entangle the wildcat if he got a fair chance; otherwise he intended to shoot the animal in defiance of his father's wishes, and then excuse the deed on the score of self-defence.

While the village was all of a tingle over the wildcat



affair, Bob Baxter, a good-looking, compactly-built boy of seventeen years, was out in the neighboring woods with his particular friend, Tom Leonard, gunning for rabbits.

Bob was a bright, energetic lad, and the most popular young fellow in Bedford village.

He lived with his uncle, Silas Oldham, who kept a general store, and through the influence of Squire Drew had been appointed postmaster.

Bob and his relative didn't hitch, as the saying is, any too well.

The old man was dictatorial in his manner and crabbed in his disposition.

He made his nephew work early and late in the store, grudgingly allowing him one afternoon a week for recreation, a privilege he would have curtailed or done away with entirely only that he was a bit afraid of Bob's resolute nature.

Bob was a faithful and valuable assistant, and Silas was a little concerned lest the boy leave him in the lurch, as he once hinted he might do if things were made too oppressive for him at his uncle's home.

It was after sundown and the boys, with half a dozen dead rabbits between them, were on their way back to the village.

"Is your gun loaded Bob?" asked Tom Leonard as they walked along.

"Yes. Why?"

"We want to be prepared for that wildcat if we should happen to meet it."

"It might be a bad thing for the cat if we came across it," replied Bob.

"Would you dare shoot it?"

"Well, say! Do you think I'd let it walk up and claw me all to pieces?"

"Well, hardly," answered Tom; "but think what Squire Drew would say if you put a charge of shot into it."

"What do I care for what the Squire would say? That brute is dangerous to the community, and ought to be shot on sight."

"That's right; but all the same, Squire Drew doesn't want it hurt. He thinks a heap of that animal."

"Then he ought to have used every precaution to prevent it from making its escape from his grounds."

"Dexter said it was the gardener's fault. He looks after the cat and forgot to fasten the cage door properly the night the animal escaped."

"It's easy enough to throw the blame on the gardener," replied Bob. "Somebody has to stand for a scapegoat in order to relieve the squire himself of responsibility. That's the way of the world, Tom."

"Well, if you shot that cat you'd get it in the neck worse than anybody else in the village."

"Why would I?"

"Because Dexter is down on you like a thousand of bricks, and he'd make things out as black as possible against you."

"Tell me something I don't know, Tom."

"He's sore on you worse than ever of late."

"Why?"

"On account of Flossie Bates."

"What about Flossie Bates?"

"Dexter is dead stuck on her, 'cause she's the prettiest and smartest girl in the village."

"I thought he didn't care for anybody that wasn't in his class."

"He doesn't except in her case."

"Well, what have I got to do with that?"

"You've got everything to do with it," replied Tom, with a grin.

"In what way?"

"Why, you know Flossie thinks a heap of you, and that galls Dexter."

"I'm sorry for him," laughed Bob.

"And she kind of gives him the cold shoulder in spite of his fine clothes and social position, and that fact hits him in a tender spot."

"I suppose Flossie has a right to choose her associates, hasn't she?"

"Sure she has. Just the same it makes Dexter wild to think that you appear to have the inner track where he wants to be the whole thing."

"Who told you all this?"

"Roscoe Sims, Dexter's chum."

"What else did he say?"

"He told me, Dexter, he was just aching for a chance to lay you out."

"He is?"

"So Sims says."

"Well, if he wants to take a shy at me, fair and above-board, I'm at his service any time I'm off duty."

"He wouldn't dare tackle you that way. He knows he'd get the worst of it."

"Well, if he dares to put up any job on me I'll make things so hot for him that he'll wish he hadn't done it."

"Then you'd be up against his old man, and that would be a serious matter for you."

"Oh, I don't know. What could he do if I was in the right?"

"He'd find some way to get back at you hard."

"I wouldn't stand for any unfair treatment at his hands."

"I don't see how you could help yourself. He's the great mogul of the village. Everybody takes their hat off to him. Take this wildcat matter—do you think if the beast belonged to any one else there would be any question about shooting it down at sight? I should say not. The people are all afraid of Squire Drew because he's a lawyer of some importance and a rich man to boot. Besides, he's the political boss of the township. He got your uncle his job as postmaster. If you got into a racket with him, you'd have your uncle jumping on you, too. Take my advice, Bob, and steer clear of the Drews."

"I'm not looking for trouble, Tom, but if it comes my way I'm not going to drop on my knees and cry like a



whipped dog. Every person in this world has his rights, and I believe in standing up for mine."

They were approaching the edge of the woods, and had forgotten all about the wildcat, when they heard a ripple of girlish laughter proceeding from the path which skirted the edge of the trees.

The sound had hardly died away when a shrill, unearthly screech took its place.

The effect on Bob and Tom was startling.

"It's the wildcat!" exclaimed Bob. "It's dollars to doughnuts that girl, whoever she is, is in danger," and he dashed forward with an impulsiveness that was natural with him.

As if in confirmation of his words, the girl in the path gave a startled cry.

Bob cocked his gun and dashed out into the open just as the blood-curdling screech was repeated.

He saw Flossie Bates cowering down, shielding with her body her little sister, Daisy, and gazing with frightened and distended eyes at a certain part of the thicket.

She seemed to be paralyzed with fear.

Bob looked, but he couldn't see the position of the wildcat.

This state of affairs didn't last but a moment, for a third scream rang out from the thicket; then, like a flash, a lean, grayish-brown animal came leaping through the air, striking the girl with its forepaws and the ground with its hind ones.

With a heartrending scream Flossie fell back on top of her sister, while the cat put down its head to seize her shoulder with its teeth.

Bob, fully alive to Flossie's peril, dashed forward and fired one barrel of his gun into the animal's side, slightly wounding it and distracting its attention from its victim.

It turned on Bob with a snarl and a look that would have turned most people's blood cold, and crouched to make a spring on the brave boy.

But Bob was too quick for it.

With a recklessness that Tom thought foolhardy, the boy rushed up and discharged the remaining barrel full in the wild cat's face, destroying the sight of both of its eyes.

## CHAPTER II.

### IN WHICH DEXTER DREW HAS SOMETHING TO SAY.

The moment after he pulled the trigger Bob sprang to one side, and it was well for him he had the presence of mind to do so, for the cat, with a terrible screech of pain and rage, leaped for the spot where the boy had just stood, only to strike the ground and tear up the grass by the roots in its agony.

"Finish it, Tom!" cried Bob, as he grasped the half-fainting girl and raised her in his arms. "Don't cry,

Daisy," he added to Flossie's little sister, who was screaming with fright. "The danger is all over."

Tom, however, was afraid to approach the wounded and sightless animal close enough to render his aim any way effective, and contented himself with circling around the struggling cat with his gun at full cock watching for a chance to fire.

"Oh, Bob, Bob, save me! Save me!" cried Flossie, throwing her arms about his neck in a paroxysm of terror.

"Brace up, Flossie," he replied, soothingly. "You're quite safe now."

"Is it dead?" she asked, looking up with a shudder.

"Not quite; but I guess I put it out of business all right."

"Where is it?"

"Look yonder," he answered, pointing at the squirming beast, which lay on its back.

"Oh, what a fearful thing!" she cried, clinging closer than ever to her young protector.

"Why don't you kill it, Tom?" asked Bob, impatiently.

Tom, thus urged, sneaked up closer to the cat, and taking aim at its head, discharged both barrels in quick succession.

The animal sprang up convulsively, whereat Tom started hastily back to get out of the way, and in his haste got his feet all tangled up and went down backward, his gun flying a yard away.

He looked so ludicrous as he scrambled up and flew for the shelter of the wood that Bob couldn't help bursting into a roar of laughter.

The wildcat, however, was practically harmless now, though by no means dead.

It still kicked and struggled in a helpless, blind sort of way, the blood dripping from its face, which was torn in a bad way.

Then it was that Bob noticed a bright red stain, showing against the white of the girl's gown, where the wildcat had dug its nails into her near the shoulder.

"Good gracious, Flossie!" he exclaimed, in a voice of anxious concern, "are you much hurt?"

"I don't know," she replied, all of a tremble.

"Brace up, Flossie. Let me see where you are hurt."

The girl blushed a little as she submitted to an examination of the wound.

"My goodness!" he said. "You had a narrow escape. If Tom and I hadn't been on hand I don't know what would have happened to you."

"It was you that saved Daisy and I, wasn't it?" she said, with a grateful look in his face while he bent over her arm and bound up the bleeding scratches with his handkerchief.

"Well, I can't deny but I did," he replied, with a thrill of satisfaction in his heart that fortune had enabled him to be of such signal service to the girl he thought so much of.

"How brave you acted! I don't see how you did it."



"I would do a great deal more than that for your sake, Flossie," he replied, earnestly.

The girl's white face flushed with a vivid blush, and she looked down at the ground.

Was she pleased or not at Bob's remark?

There was a moment of silence while the boy finished tying the bandage and then pulled the sleeve of Flossie's dress down over it.

"I shall never forget what you have done for us as long as I live," she said fervently, looking up again.

"Don't worry yourself about that," replied Bob, cheerfully.

"But I want you to believe I am very, very grateful indeed to you."

"Oh, I believe it."

"You are so good to bind up the scratches, too," she went on. "A doctor couldn't have done it better," with a shy little smile.

"Oh, come now, Flossie, you know that isn't so," he objected.

"Yes, but is it," she persisted.

"Nonsense! You must go to the druggist when you get to the village and let him fix you up shipshape."

"No," she replied, shaking her pretty head in a positive kind of way; "it's all right as it is."

"I hope it is," he answered, doubtfully. "But how is it you are away out here?"

"Daisy and I went to call on grandma at the farm."

"Oh, I see. It's a wonder you would do that when you knew that wildcat was prowling around the neighborhood."

"I didn't think there was any danger in the daytime."

"Well, you see there was. The cat looks as if it was giving its last kick. I guess Tom and I will get a hauling over the coals for doing it up, but I don't care. If I hadn't shot it it would probably have killed you. That ought to be sufficient excuse."

"Why should you get into any trouble for killing it?"

"Because Squire Drew didn't want it injured."

"Why, the idea!" ejaculated the girl, indignantly; "just as if the thing ought to run wild till a few people were killed or seriously injured. Wait till I tell my story, and then I am sure he will have no fault to find with you."

"I hope he won't, for I don't want to have a run in with him."

The wildcat was evidently breathing its last.

Tom had recovered his nerve and had come forward and was watching its final spasms.

At that moment Dexter Drew and six companions came upon the scene through the woods where they had been looking for the wildcat.

They stopped when they saw not only Bob, Tom, Flossie and her sister, but the expiring animal.

Dexter took one look at the cat and then flew into a rage.

"Who shot that animal?" he demanded, with something of his father's overbearing manner.

"I did, to begin with," replied Bob, quietly.

"You did, eh? Don't you know that my father gave orders that it wasn't to be shot?" he snarled, eying Bob in no friendly way.

"Yes, I know he did. But the animal attacked Flossie Bates and her sister, and I had to shoot it to save them."

"Tell that to the marines," sneered Dexter.

"It is the truth, Dexter Drew," spoke up the girl. "If it hadn't been for Bob I should have been dead now."

"Of course I must believe you, Miss Flossie, if you say so," replied Dexter, with a gracious smirk, removing his hat and bowing to her. "But I dare say you were somewhat frightened at the time, and so that boy has persuaded you that he really did save your life. Why, I assure you, Miss Flossie, that wildcat wasn't at all dangerous. We've had him for two years on our grounds and he never did the slightest damage."

"That's because you had it confined in a cage," replied Bob, dryly.

"I am not addressing my remarks to you," answered Dexter, haughtily. "Time enough for you to speak when you're spoken to."

"You've no right to talk to Bob in that way," flashed Flossie, in great indignation.

"Excuse me, Miss Flossie, if I differ with you," replied Dexter, with a disagreeable look. "I am very much surprised to think that such a nice girl as you would stand up for a common working boy like him."

"Indeed!" she retorted. "I wish you to understand that Bob Baxter is my friend. Even if he hadn't been such before, he would be now after the service he has just rendered me."

"I can't say that I admire your taste in this case, Miss Flossie," Dexter said with a sneer.

"I don't care whether you do or not," she replied flatly.

That was plain English right from the shoulder, and Dexter was much chagrined, especially as he heard his cronies snicker behind him.

"I shall inform my father that you killed his wildcat, and I guess you'll hear something from him that you won't like," said Dexter, regarding Bob with a wicked kind of satisfaction.

"I am prepared to take the consequences," answered Bob, coolly. "When he hears my story and that of Flossie's he'll be satisfied that the act was justified."

"We'll see. My father would rather lose a thousand dollars than that wildcat. I'll bet he'll make it warm for you."

"He'd better not. He might regret it."

"What do you mean by that?" demanded Dexter, angrily. "Do you dare to threaten my father?"

"What's the matter with you? I did not threaten him."

"Yes, you did. I can prove it by every one here. Didn't he say my father would regret it if he got called down for shooting that cat?" asked Dexter, turning to his friend, Roscoe Sims.



"That's what he did," replied Sims, who was always eager to back up the squire's son.

"All right. Have it your own way," said Bob, carelessly. "Come, Tom, let's be traveling. Are you going with us, Flossie?"

"Of course," she answered.

The two boys and the girls then walked off down the path toward the village, leaving Dexter Drew and his associates to follow at their pleasure

### CHAPTER III.

#### IN WHICH SQUIRE DREW EXPRESSES HIS SENTIMENTS.

The news soon flew all over the village that Squire Drew's wildcat had been shot by Bob Baxter and Tom Leonard, after the animal had attacked Flossie Bates, and the intelligence was received with a great deal of satisfaction.

There was an unusual number of customers at Silas Oldham's store that evening.

For all that, there wasn't such a big lot of cash taken in or goods chalked up on the slate.

The people went to the store purposely to hear about Bob's adventure with the wildcat from his own lips.

Without exception his listeners agreed that the boy had exhibited uncommon pluck under trying circumstances, and that he had done the correct thing in putting the vicious animal out of the way.

Still they wondered what the squire would say about the death of his pet.

The store was more than half full of interested villagers when the portly form of Squire Drew darkened the entrance.

Everybody made way for him in the most respectful manner when he entered and advanced to the spot where Bob was holding forth.

The squire was not alone, for his son Dexter and Roscoe Sims was with him.

"I wish a word with you, young man," said the autocrat of the village pompously to Bob when he reached the counter.

"Yes, sir," said Bob politely.

"I understand that you came across my cat this afternoon, you and young Leonard, and that you deliberately shot it."

"I will tell you about it, sir," began the boy, when the great man interrupted him.

"I asked you if it isn't a fact that you shot my cat?" he demanded severely.

"Yes, sir, I shot the wildcat; but I had to do it to save Flossie Bates' life. The animal sprang out of North Woods at her, and had his claws on her arm when I fired a charge of shot into its side. It then turned on me and

crouched for a spring when I discharged my other barrel in its face. Tom Leonard afterward finished it."

"Couldn't you have stunned the animal by hitting it on the head with the butt of your gun, instead of going to the extreme of killing it, when you know that I expressly requested that the cat be taken alive?"

"No, sir. The case was altogether too serious for me to take any chances."

"Indeed!" sneered the squire.

"I should probably have lost my life if I had tried to act as you say."

"I think you exaggerate the matter in order to save yourself from censure."

"I refer you to Flossie Bates, sir. She will corroborate my statement."

"I dare say. I have no doubt you and she have arranged a story to suit yourselves."

"No, sir," replied Bob, with an indignant flush; "we have arranged nothing. I have told you the honest truth."

"And you expect me to believe this cock-and-bull story of yours about saving that girl's life?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then let me say, young man, that I put very little faith in it. I had rather have lost a thousand dollars than that cat. A thousand dollars, do you hear me?"

"I am sorry, sir. It was too bad that it escaped from its cage."

"Had you captured the animal, as I fancy you might have done, and returned it to me uninjured I should have paid you \$25. As you chose to kill it, in defiance of my wishes, I shall have a few words to say about you to your uncle. And another thing, it appears that my son and some of his friends came upon the scene soon after you had accomplished your object. He had some conversation with you in which he very properly referred to my probable displeasure as soon as I learned of the death of the animal, and it appears you made use of some words which my son construed as a threat against me in case I took you to task for killing my cat. What have you to say about that?"

"Dexter said you would certainly make it warm for me, and I admit that I said you would regret it if you did."

"Then you admit that you used a threat against me?"

"I did not intend that as a threat, sir. I meant that you would feel sorry afterward when you had heard all the facts."

"That won't do, young man," said the squire angrily, shaking his gold-headed cane at the boy. "You threatened me, Squire Conrad Drew, and I am going to see that you are punished for it."

"I don't think you are treating me fair" expostulated the boy.

"What's that?"

"You're acting unfairly toward me."

"How dare you say that to my face, you young whipper-



snapper?" sputtered the nabob, growing very red in the face. "Are you aware who you are speaking to?"

"Yes, sir," answered Bob, respectfully.

"I consider you a very impertinent boy. You show very little respect to a man of my standing in the village. If I had my way I'd have you horsewhipped."

It was very embarrassing for Bob to receive this layout before a store full of people.

Not only that, but the injustice of it all made him intensely indignant.

He was not in the least afraid of the village mogul.

The lawyer's pompous demeanor and blustering manner did not overawe him, as it did so many of the villagers.

In his opinion Squire Conrad Drew wasn't any better than any one else in the village, only richer and puffed up with a feeling of consequence.

The squire, having said his say, sought out Silas Oldham, who was at the back of the store, and he said a few strenuous things to the old man about his nephew that didn't improve the storekeeper's disposition.

While he was thus engaged his son Dexter and his friend Roscoe Sims were nosing about the place to fill in time until the lawyer was ready to take his departure.

When they finally followed the squire out on to Main street there was something puffing out Dexter's jacket pocket which wasn't there when he entered the store, while he and Sims were chuckling at a great rate over something which appeared to amuse them greatly.

When the time came to close up Bob lugged in all the boxes and barrels that ornamented the front of the store during business hours, put up the shutters and locked the front door.

All this time Silas Oldham was sitting by the fire at the back of the store looking as black as a thundergust.

Bob noticed his threatening aspect, and decided it was all on account of what Squire Drew had been saying to his uncle.

He expected to have a racket with Mr. Oldham before he went to bed, and he was not disappointed.

However, Bob was pretty independent.

He had stood all the calling down that he was going to that evening, so when Mr. Oldham opened up on him, he put on his hat and marched out of the store by the back door, leaving his uncle to talk to his own stock-in-trade and the fixtures.

Bob walked up a back street, and then wandered aimlessly around for more than an hour, by which time he judged Mr. Oldham had gone to bed and was probably asleep.

Then he turned his steps back to the store, and finding that his uncle had fastened the back door he clambered up on the roof of the outhouse which served for the kitchen of the establishment, reached the window of his room, pushed up the sash and entered.

As he turned to close it again, a ruddy flash of light suddenly appeared at the other end of the village and a

moment later a sullen explosion reached his astonished ears.

"What the dickens can that be?" he asked himself as he strained his eyes in the direction whence the light and sound had come.

Neither, however, was repeated.

"Something has blown up. I wonder if it could have been Squire's Drew's patent gas tank?"

That suggestion seemed quite reasonable, as the squire's house lay in that direction, and he had an apparatus on his grounds for manufacturing and storing illuminating gas.

"Well, I don't care," mused Bob. "It isn't my funeral."

With that he shut down his window and went to bed.

He little dreamed at the moment that the flash and report was his funeral, so to speak, or rather that it was the result of a little conspiracy between Dexter Drew and his friend Roscoe Sims to put Bob into a hole that nearly resulted disastrously for the bright boy who had done such a heroic action that afternoon, and at the same time rid the village of a standing menace

## CHAPTER IV.

### IN WHICH BOB IS ARRESTED

Rap—rap—rap—rap!

Bob had been in the land of dreams about an hour when he was suddenly awakened by a sharp rat-tat on the back door almost under his window.

He listened intently, not quite sure what it was that had awakened him.

Rap—rap—rap—bang—bang!

The last two whacks on the door were loud enough to awaken the Seven Sleepers.

Bob was out of bed in a moment.

"There's some one pounding on the door," he muttered as he started for the window to look out.

Only a man who was stone deaf could have doubted that fact.

"I wonder what can be the matter? Is the house afire, or the house next door?"

Bang—bang—bang—bang!

"Gee whiz! Whoever it is seems to be mighty impatient."

He heard his uncle come out on the landing and stump down the stairs.

Then he threw up his window and looked out.

There were half a dozen people in the yard, while Andrew Bates, Flossie's father, who was head Constable of Bedford village, was standing close to the back door.

Clearly it was he who had done the rapping.

It was a clear, cold night and the moonlight shone full on the rear of the building and into Bob's face.



"There he is now," exclaimed a voice below, and instantly every eye was turned upward toward the boy.

At that moment Silas Oldham demanded through the door who was there.

"I am Andrew Bates, the Constable, and I want to get in."

Mr. Oldham unbolted and unlocked the door and the Constable entered, the others remaining outside.

"Hello!" Bob called down to the men in the yard. "What's the trouble?"

"Hasn't he got a nerve?" the boy heard one of the persons say, while the rest looked at him and never said a word.

"There isn't a fire in the neighborhood, is there?" asked Bob again.

"Well, I'll be jiggered!" was wafted up to him, but he received no reply.

The boy thought this was mighty strange.

"As they don't seem inclined to answer civil questions I shan't bother talking to them," muttered Bob.

Just then there was a rap on his chamber door, and then it was opened without waiting for him to answer it.

His uncle entered the room, followed by the Constable.

Mr. Oldham looked even more grouchy and unforbidding than he did at the time the boy closed the store for the night.

He seemed about to say something, but he didn't, and permitted Mr. Bates to come forward and address his nephew.

"Bob Baxter," said the Constable in a severe tone, "I am sorry to be obliged to come here at this time of night on an unpleasant errand."

Bob looked at him in great wonder and awaited further explanation.

"I have always had the very highest opinion of you, young man, and so has my family. You are the last boy I should have thought capable of engaging in an underhand and criminal act."

"Why, what do you mean, Mr. Bates?" asked Bob, in surprise.

"I mean that I have come here to arrest you——"

"Arrest me!" gasped Bob.

"Exactly."

"Why, what have I done?"

"You are accused of blowing up and completely wrecking Squire Drew's gas plant this night."

"Who accused me of such a thing?" demanded Bob, indignantly.

"The squire does."

"He must be crazy."

"I regret to say that he has evidence in his possession which connects you with the crime."

"What evidence?"

"You will know in good time. You will have to put on your clothes and come with me."

"But I had nothing to do with the blowing up of the

squire's gas plant," protested the boy. "I haven't been near Squire Drew's place for a week."

"I hope you will be able to establish that fact to the satisfaction of the justice, Bob; but I am bound to say that the facts look black against you."

"There is certainly some mistake."

"I hope there is. You might just as well be dressing yourself as to stand talking there. You are only keeping me waiting."

"What are you going to do with me?"

"I have got to take you to the lock-up."

"It's an outrage to put me in prison on such an unfounded charge, Mr. Bates."

"I am sorry the necessity of doing so is forced upon me; but I have no choice in the matter. I have an order for your arrest in my pocket signed by Justice Smith."

"Well, it's a shame, that's all I've got to say," replied Bob, beginning to dress himself. "I hope you don't believe me guilty of such a crime, Mr. Bates?"

"I don't know what to think, Bob," returned the Constable. "As I said before, you are the last boy in the village I should connect with a dishonorable act, but the facts seem to point very strongly at you. I hope you will be able to justify yourself. It is very painful to me to be obliged to treat you in this way, especially after what you did for Flossie and Daisy this afternoon. I haven't yet thanked you for that service, but I do so now," and Mr. Bates, with considerable emotion, held out his hand to his prisoner.

"You're quite welcome, Mr. Bates," replied Bob, as he accepted the proffered hand. "But you needn't let that worry you in the execution of your duty. I am not guilty of this charge, and I guess nobody can make an innocent person out to be guilty. Just before I came to bed I saw a flash and heard an explosion in the direction of Squire Drew's home. I was looking out of that window at the time, which was about eleven o'clock. I couldn't very well have been in two places at one time."

"I hope you can prove that, Bob; but your uncle said you left the store in an angry mood about ten o'clock, one hour before the explosion, and he has no knowledge when you returned. He believes you were not in the house at eleven o'clock."

"I dare say he was asleep before that hour. At any rate I had to climb on the kitchen roof in order to reach my room, for he locked and bolted the back door so I couldn't get in."

"You are ready to swear that you were in your room at eleven o'clock, and also that you saw a flash of light and heard an explosion at that time?" said Mr. Bates.

"I am."

"I am very glad to hear you say so, and I hope you will be able to account for the piece of evidence the squire holds against you," replied the Constable with a look of relief, for he really liked Bob, and he could not deny but there was a ring of truth and sincerity in his tones; be-



sides the boy's reputation was the very best in Bedford village, and that was much in his favor.

"I am ready now to go with you, Mr. Bates," said Bob, putting on his hat. "Unjust as this charge is, I'm ready to face it."

The Constable walked out of the room, went down the stairs and stepped out into the yard, followed by Bob, where they were awaited by the six curiously disposed villagers who had accompanied Mr. Bates on his official errand.

All hands took up their line of march for the jail, a small building provided with barred windows and a strong door, adjoining the Bates home.

Instead of opening the door of the lock-up, Mr. Bates conducted Bob into his own house and shut the door in the faces of the inquisitive six, who, after lingering about for awhile talking over the wreck of the squire's gas plant, finally broke up and departed for their homes.

"Now, Bob," said Mr. Bates as soon as they were alone together, "I haven't the heart to lock you up in that place next door like a common criminal. I am under the greatest obligations to you for saving the lives of my dear children this afternoon, and I shouldn't sleep all night if I put you in there, as my duty calls for. Therefore I ask you to give me your word of honor that you will not leave my house to-night, and then you shall go upstairs and finish your sleep in our spare room."

"You are very kind, Mr. Bates. Of course, I promise you that I won't run away. It is the very last thing I should think of doing. Indeed, it would be a ridiculous proceeding on my part, and would certainly make people think me guilty of the deed."

"I agree with you there. You would probably soon be caught and brought back, and you would find it much harder then to clear yourself. Very well, I accept your parole. I will show you to your room."

It was a long time before Bob could get to sleep again that night.

His mind was in a whirl over the serious charge which had been brought against him, and he taxed his brain in his efforts to think what possible proofs there could be against him when he knew he was so utterly guiltless.

That there was some evidence he was satisfied from Mr. Bates' words.

"What the dickens can it be? I can't think of a single thing. No one saw me near the Drew grounds to-night, for the reason that I wasn't at any time within a mile of the place. Well, I'll learn all about it in the morning when I am brought up before the justice."

Bob turned over and resolutely resolved to forget the matter and go to sleep, and he was so successful that ten minutes later he was sleeping the sleep of the just.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### IN WHICH BOB IS REMANDED TO JAIL.

Flossie Bates was a very much surprised girl when her father led Bob Baxter in to breakfast next morning.

She was still more surprised and very indignant when Mr. Bates explained that Bob was under arrest on the charge of destroying Squire Drew's gas plant the night before.

"The idea!" she exclaimed. "Just as if Bob would do such a thing!"

"Thank you, Flossie," said Bob, gratefully.

"You needn't thank me, Bob," she replied with some spirit. "I wouldn't believe you guilty if the whole village insisted that you was."

"You are very kind to defend me so strongly," replied the boy, with a beaming look.

"I don't think you need any defense."

"I am afraid Squire Drew entertains a different opinion."

The Constable nodded, as if there was no doubt of that fact.

"Who has accused Bob?" asked Flossie.

"The squire himself," replied her father.

"On what grounds?"

"I'd rather not say. It will all come out at the examination this morning."

"Did Squire Drew order you to arrest Bob?"

"He woke me up last night about midnight and handed me a warrant signed by Justice Smith which called for Bob's arrest. He said his gas plant had been blown up and completely destroyed, and that he was certain Bob was the person who did it because he had threatened to get even with him on account of the wildeat affair, also because he had found a certain tell-tale bit of the boy's property at the scene of the explosion."

"Found a bit of my property on his grounds!" exclaimed Bob, in a surprised tone. "What did he find?"

"I'd rather not mention what it was," replied Mr. Bates. "It will be brought to light at the examination, and then you will have the opportunity to disprove it if you can."

"I have no idea what it can be," said Bob. "I haven't missed anything."

"If it belongs to Bob, then, somebody must have stolen it and placed it where it was found to get him into trouble," spoke up Flossie.

"Have you an enemy who would do such a thing?" asked the Constable.

"I don't believe I have an enemy in the village; that is, except Dexter Drew, and I don't see how he could get hold of anything that belongs to me."

After breakfast Bob talked with Flossie about the trouble he was in till it was time for him to go to the office of the Justice.

When he emerged from the house in company with the Constable and Flossie they found Dexter Drew, a number of his cronies and half the other village boys gathered about the door of the jail, where they supposed Bob had been locked up all night.

Dexter and his friends were prepared to sneer and make fun of his hapless condition, and they were very



much disappointed when they found he had not been confined in the lock-up at all.

"What's the meaning of this, Mr. Bates?" asked Dexter, rather insolently. "Don't you keep your prisoners in the lock-up any more?"

"I don't propose to discuss that matter with you, Master Drew," replied the Constable shortly. "You haven't any right to question my methods."

"I'll bet my father will have something to say about this," retorted Dexter, darkly. "The jail is the proper place for common criminals."

"That's what it is," snickered Roscoe Sims.

"I am surprised that you should call a boy with such a good reputation as Bob Baxter a common criminal," replied Mr. Bates.

"What else is he?" snorted Dexter, insultingly. "Didn't he enter our grounds last night and blow up the governor's gas plant?"

"That has got to be proved yet."

"It will be proved all right, don't you worry. Won't it, Roscoe?"

"Bet your life," grinned his crony.

Bob's cheeks blazed with indignation and wrath.

If he had yielded to the impulse of the moment he would have flown at both of the boys and pounded them till they cried for mercy.

As for Flossie, she bit her tongue till it smarted, lest she say what was in her mind, which you may well believe would not have been thought complimentary by either Dexter or his friend Sims.

It was a humiliating march to the office of Justice Smith, for Dexter and his cronies flung a constant stream of jibes at him, in spite of the rebukes of the Constable.

Justice Smith was a particular friend of Squire Drew, and consequently was prejudiced against Bob from the start.

He also held to the idea that nearly all boys were more or less bad and needed punishment on general principles.

For this reason Bob soon found that he was greatly handicapped in his defence.

As soon as Bob was arraigned before the Justice that portly gentleman favored him with a scowl, just as if something he had eaten that morning disagreed with him, and inquired what was the charge against the prisoner, although he knew already what it was well enough.

The charge was read by the young man who acted as his clerk.

"I believe this is the first time you have ever appeared before me, young man," said Justice Smith, severely.

"Yes, sir," replied Bob.

"I never thought that a boy of this village would be haled before me on so serious a charge as this. If you had attended church and Sunday school regularly, young man——"

"I do attend regularly, sir," replied Bob, respectfully.

"Hey!" exclaimed the Justice, leaning forward and looking at the boy through his doubled-barreled eye-

glasses as if he was examining some new species of the genus homo. "Did I understand you to say that you do go to church and Sunday school regularly?"

"Yes, sir."

Justice Smith removed his spectacles, wiped them carefully, readjusted them on his big nose and then gazed around the room as if Bob's admission was a most astonishing one.

"Sunday school always inculcates good, honest and noble precepts in a boy's mind, and I regret to think that you should have so far disregarded its teachings," said the Justice, looking around the room again, as if he thought the sentiments he had just uttered ought to be applauded.

"Would it not be better, Mr. Smith, for you to wait and hear the evidence before deciding me guilty?" asked Bob, boldly.

"What? What's that?" gasped the Justice, turning red in the face.

"I only offered a suggestion in my own interest," replied Bob.

"How dare you make such an impudent remark! I have a great mind to commit you for contempt of court," he said, mopping his face vigorously. "Now, look me in the eye, Bob Baxter, for that's your name, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are you guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty," replied the boy, promptly.

"The prisoner pleads not guilty. Enter that in your book, Jackson," to the clerk. "Sit down, prisoner," and Bob took a chair alongside of Mr. Bates. "Let the case proceed. Squire Drew, I believe you are the complainant. Take the witness chair. Swear the squire, Jackson."

Squire Drew was duly sworn and then proceeded to substantiate the charge he had brought against Bob.

He said he and his family had been suddenly awakened from their sleep the preceding night by a loud explosion on the grounds.

On investigation it was discovered that his gas plant, which he had erected at considerable cost, and which was the only one in the village, had been completely wrecked.

Hunting about for some evidence that would lead to the detection of the rascal or rascals who had been guilty of the deed, he had found an empty can containing a few grains of gunpowder.

On looking closely at the can he had found Bob Baxter's name scratched upon it.

He showed it to his son, and Dexter said it certainly was the property of Bob Baxter, for he had seen it in his possession that afternoon at the time he came upon Bob, Tom Leonard, Flossie and Daisy Bates on the edge of North Woods, where Bob had killed his pet wildcat.

He then recalled the threat Bob had made against him, in case he reprimanded him for shooting the aforesaid cat.

He had reprimanded the boy that evening at his uncle's store in the presence of many of the villagers, and he now



believed Bob had taken this means of getting square with him.

He would offer the powder can in evidence, and was prepared to call several witnesses to prove the truth of his story.

Squire Drew placed the powder can on the Justice's table and retired from the chair fully satisfied that Bob would be remanded for trial.

The next witness was Dexter Drew, who swore that Bob had uttered the threat in question.

He also swore he had seen his father pick the powder can up close to the wreck of the gas plant; that he had seen it slung around Bob's shoulder attached to a cord on the previous afternoon, and that he was certain it was the same can.

At any rate Bob's name was on it, and he thought that settled the matter anyway.

Roscoe Sims was then called to the chair and corroborated Dexter's testimony so far as it applied to the threat he had heard Bob utter, and the fact that he had seen the powder can in question in his possession.

Tom Leonard was next called, and reluctantly admitted that his friend Bob had made a remark which might be construed as a threat, but which he didn't believe was intended as one.

He also admitted that the powder can was Bob's property.

Flossie was called, but she parried all of the Justice's questions that tended to criminate Bob.

She attempted to tell how the boy had bravely risked his life to save her from the ferocious wildcat, but Justice Smith shut her up with the remark that that had nothing to do with the present case.

The last witness who appeared against Bob was his uncle.

He testified that Bob had left the store in very bad humor at about ten o'clock, which was something contrary to his usual custom; that he went up the back street toward the end of the village where Squire Drew's home was situated, and that he had no idea when he returned home.

That ended the case against the boy, and everybody in the room was of the opinion that Bob was either guilty or would have a hard time to prove his innocence.

"Have you anything to say in your own behalf?" asked Justice Smith, glaring down at Bob.

"I wish to repeat that I am not guilty of blowing up Squire Drew's gas plant. I have not been within a mile of his home for more than a week."

Squire Drew smiled sarcastically at this statement, while Dexter and Sims laughed derisively.

"Do you deny that this powder can is your property?" thundered the Justice in an intimidating way.

"I do not deny it," replied Bob, in a firm and clear voice.

His acknowledgment created something of a sensation,

and many who had wavered before in their opinion as to his guilt had no longer any doubt on the subject.

"That can must have been stolen from the store last evening and placed where it was found by Squire Drew by some one who intended to get me into trouble. The person who did such a mean thing as that is probably the one who used the powder that was in the can to blow up the gas plant. I haven't the least doubt but that the whole thing is a conspiracy to ruin my reputation and have me put in prison."

Bob spoke his mind fearlessly, and there was a ring of truth and honest indignation in his tones.

He did not look like a guilty boy, and many of the people who had just decided against him flopped over in his favor.

Squire Drew, his son and Roscoe Sims sneered openly at his statement, and Justice Smith was not much impressed by it.

"Is that all you have to say?" he asked in the usually ungracious way he addressed the prisoner.

"That is all, except that I deny that the remark I made at the edge of North Woods was intended as a threat against Squire Drew."

Bob then sat down.

The Justice mopped his face, cleaned his spectacles, and then proceeded to give his ruling.

"I find that the evidence is very much against the prisoner. It is therefore with regret that I feel obliged to commit Bob Baxter for trial at the sessions to be held next month at Beavertown, and order that the Constable convey him without delay to the county seat and turn him over to the warden of the county jail. The court stands adjourned."

## CHAPTER VI.

### HOW TOM GETS INTO TROUBLE AND BOB MAKES HIS ESCAPE.

Not until Justice Smith had given his decision that he was to be taken forthwith to Beavertown, the county seat, to be imprisoned as a common malefactor until the day when he should be brought before the presiding judge to stand trial for a very grave crime, did Bob fully realize how serious was the situation in which he stood.

For a moment or two he sat like one stunned, gazing straight ahead, but seeing nothing, while Flossie, seated at his side, sobbed as if her heart would break.

The majority of the spectators, whatever were their private conclusions as to his guilt, felt sorry for the boy who until this moment had been regarded as one of the best lads in Bedford.

There were a few who made no bones about exhibiting their satisfaction at Bob's downfall.

The chief of these were Dexter Drew and Roscoe Sims.

Their sneers and inuendoes so thoroughly enraged Tom Leonard that the moment he got outside of the office



where the examination had been held he smashed them both in the face, one after the other, bowling them over like a pair of tenpins.

Dexter caught the worst blow, and the blood was streaming from his nose when he got up from the ground.

Squire Drew, who had seen the assault on his son, was furious.

"How dare you strike my son!" he cried to Tom. "I will have you arrested."

He rushed back to Justice Smith to get a warrant against Tom for assault, and while he was getting it Tom knocked Dexter down a second time.

This was enough for the young aristocrat, who ran howling into the office after his father, closely followed by Sims, with one hand over his damaged eye.

Somebody told Tom what was in store for him, and advised him to make himself scarce.

He thought well of the advice and skipped out for the river, his idea being to get out of the village for a few days until the matter could be squared.

In the meantime, as the last of the people were filing out of the room, Mr. Bates, with a sad expression on his features, tapped his prisoner on the shoulder, as a signal that it was time for them to be moving.

The touch of his hand brought Bob back to himself.

"You are going to take me to Beavertown jail," he said in a broken voice.

"I am compelled to do so, no matter what my private feelings are in the matter."

"Once there, though I swear I am innocent, it will be all over with me. Squire Drew is determined to send me to prison, and I won't be able to save myself. It is a put-up job, and I am thoroughly assured that Dexter Drew is at the bottom of it. He hates me, and he told it round among the boys that he was just aching for a chance to do me up. He and Roscoe Sims have made the chance between them, and backed by the squire's influence they mean to ruin me. But I won't go to jail if I can help myself," cried Bob, defiantly. "It's an outrage to send me there."

"I am afraid you can't help yourself," replied the Constable, sympathetically.

"Yes, you can, Bob. It will break my heart if father has to take you to Beavertown. Jump out of that window and run away from the village."

"I will," cried Bob, making a step toward the window.

"I can't permit this, Bob," exclaimed Mr. Bates. "I am responsible——"

"Don't mind him, Bob," cried Flossie, eagerly. "Jump out, quick."

The Constable in duty bound tried to prevent the boy from making his escape by way of the window, but Flossie clung on to her father and thus gave Bob the opportunity to carry out his sudden resolve.

"Hey, hey! What's this?" cried Justice Smith, looking up from the warrant he was signing for Tom Leonard's arrest. "Stop that boy, Constable!"

But Flossie was determined Bob should get away, and she so handicapped her father that the boy was able to throw up the window, leap out and start at a run for the cross street down which he flew like a hare, while the villagers looked on in surprise, but made no effort to head him off.

Dexter forgot his bloody nose and Roscoe Sims his sore eye in the excitement of the chase which the Constable presently started; but Bob had a good start, and was soon out of sight.

He, too, made for the river and when he reached it he was surprised to see his friend, Tom, hauling at the rope which held an old flat-boat to the shore.

"Why, Tom, is that you?" he asked, with a feeling of sudden gladness.

Tom jumped nearly a foot off the ground as he recognized Bob.

"How the deuce did you manage to get away?" he said to Bob.

"I jumped out of the window and ran for my life. But what are you going to do with that flat-boat?"

"Going down the river to the next town in her."

"What for?" asked Bob, in wonder.

"To avoid being arrested and put in the lock-up."

"Why should you be arrested? What have you done?"

"I smashed Dexter Drew twice in the face and bloodied his nose, and his old man has got a warrant out for me by this time."

"Great Scott! Did you really swat Dexter?"

"I did, bet your life, and I handed a good one out to Roscoe Sims, too."

"You're a brick, Tom. I'd have given most anything for a chance to tackle those two chaps myself. They're the two meanest boys on earth."

"That's what they are. I couldn't stand by and see them gloat over your misfortune, so I just up and let 'em have it good. I wish I'd been able to give them more of the same thing. It would be a heap of satisfaction to me."

"I'm sorry you got into trouble on my account, Tom."

"Don't say a word, Bob. What's the use of being a fellow's friend if you don't stick up for him when he's in trouble?"

"I shan't forget it, Tom, you may depend."

"Hello!" cried Tom, hauling Bob on to the boat. "Here come Baxter and Sims now. I don't believe they've seen us yet. They're looking for some trace of you, I'll bet. Dive down into that hatch. Quick! I'll follow. Then when they come close to the water, or if they should happen to get aboard this boat, we'll jump out and lick thunder out of them."

This maneuver was quickly carried out and when Dexter and Sims came fully into view there was no sign of Bob and Tom.

But quick as the two fugitives had been, Dexter had seen them, and where they went, and he communicated the fact to Sims.



"They're in the hold of that old flat-boat. Let's run aboard, pull down the cover and fasten it, then we'll have them trapped," suggested Dexter, with a chuckle.

"All right," agreed Sims in high glee at the thought of capturing both of the fugitives at one stroke.

They rushed down to the river bank, stepped lightly on board of the flat-boat, and sneaked quickly over to the hatch beneath the combing of which Bob and Tom were waiting expectantly in readiness to leap out, catch their enemies and administer to them a sound drubbing before they shook the dust of Bedford from their feet.

But as it happened Dexter and Sims were a deal cuter and slicker than either Bob or Tom took them to be.

They reached the open hatch before their presence was suspected on board the old boat.

With a quick glance below they clapped over the hatch upon Bob and Tom, and pushed the staple into place, thus making prisoners of the fugitives.

"Ho, ho, ho!" shouted Dexter, gleefully, dancing a jig on the top of the scuttle. "We've got them like a pair of rats in a trap."

"You bet we have," yelled Sims, hilariously.

"You stay here and watch that they don't get out while I run back and find the Constable and fetch him here." said Dexter.

"I'll do it, only hurry."

So off went Dexter at a run on the errand so pleasing to his mean little nature.

"Gee whiz!" cried Tom in dismay when the scuttle was closed above their heads and secured. "We're caught!"

"I'm afraid we are, and what is worse than all we've been captured by Dexter Drew and Roscoe Sims. They must have seen us after all, and played a trick on us. I'm so disgusted I could kick myself if I had the room to do it."

"What are we going to do now?" asked Tom, helplessly.

"What can we do?" replied his companion in misfortune.

A chink of sunlight struggling through the side of the boat attracted Bob's attention at that moment, and reaching toward it he pushed aside a rough inside board shutter.

There was a small window, not more than six inches square, which admitted light and ventilation to the hold.

Bob stuck his face against it, and could see the river bank close at hand and the houses of the village beyond.

He heard Dexter tell his crony to stay on the deck of the boat while he hunted up the Constable, and a moment after he saw the squire's son jump ashore and run up the road which would bring him into Main street.

Turning his eyes downward, he saw within easy arm's reach the end of the rope which held the flat-boat swinging idly in the swift current.

The sight of that rope put an idea into Bob's head, and a great idea, too.

They were prisoners in the hold, it was true, but what

prevented him from using the sharp jack-knife in his pocket to cut the boat loose from its moorings?

Then it would go speeding down with the tide toward Grassville, ten miles below, and before that place was reached they might manage somehow to make their escape from the hold.

While the idea was at white heat in his brain, Bob whipped out his knife, stuck his arm out of the window, and with the glittering edge of the jack-knife severed the strands of the thin cable.

The last strand parted with a sudden snap and the flat-boat swung out from the bank with a rush as the tide seized it and started it on its trip down the river.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ROSCOE SIMS OWNS UP.

Roscoe Sims started to his feet with a cry of dismay, and made a rush to jump ashore, but when he reached a position to attempt the feat the bank was too far off for him to make it, were he twice as agile as he was.

"Jumping jibbooms!" exclaimed Tom. "What's happened?"

"Nothing much," grinned Bob. "Only we're afloat." "Afloat!"

"Sure thing. I reached out through that little window and cut the rope with my jack-knife. What's the use remaining alongside the bank for Mr. Bates to walk on board and lead us away like a pair of lambs to slaughter?"

"And where are we bound?"

"Down river."

"And those chaps on deck are with us."

"Only Roscoe Sims. Dexter went off a moment ago to find the Constable and bring him down to the boat."

"That's where he'll be fooled," chuckled Tom, in high glee.

"Well, rather. Just listen to Sims, will you. He's hopping about like a monkey on a hot stove. I wonder if we couldn't get him to let us out?"

They pounded lustily on the cover of the scuttle, but the boy on deck paid no attention to the racket, and they had to give it up.

"It won't take the boat long to reach Grassville at this rate," said Tom, "but, the dickens take it, we won't be able to stop."

"Sims will probably hail some one along the Grassville waterfront and have the boat caught and hauled in to the shore."

"Where will we come in, then?"

"In the soup, for he'll get the town authorities to take us in charge and notify Bedford by telephone that we have been recaptured."

"Say, I don't like that for a cent."



"Neither do I, but I don't see how we can help ourselves as the case stands."

Bob looked from the little window and saw that they were gliding along through a farming district.

There were only two or three houses in view in the distance, a mile or so apart, while the only signs of the life was the smoke which issued from their chimneys.

"We are certainly in a bad fix," grumbled Tom, kicking his heels against the bulkhead which separated this section of the hold from the main and more open hold of the flat-boat.

"Sims seems to have subsided. I wonder what he is doing?" said Bob.

He put his hand against the scuttle hatch to see if he could lift it enough above the combing to enable him to take a squint on deck.

He found that he could do so, and easily made out Roscoe Sims seated in a dejected pose at the other end of the craft, gazing at the shore.

"I wonder if I couldn't get at the staple somehow and push it out?" said Bob.

Tom got interested at once.

"Try your knife blade," he suggested.

"That won't work."

"Why not?"

"It's too short and too stiff. I want something long and thin, that'll bend and yet will be stiff enough to push out the staple."

"Where are you going to get it?"

"I give it up."

"Got a match?"

"Yes."

"Strike it and look around this place. Maybe you can find something that'll answer."

Bob lit a match and illuminated their narrow prison.

He searched every corner and spot with his eyes, but the place was quite bare of anything but wisps of straw.

"Nothing doing," he said, disappointedly. "I'll have to see if I can reach the staple with my fingers."

He tried and found he could just touch the point.

By steady and persistent effort he managed to work it loose and push it out of the hasp, then he lifted the cover, and the way to freedom lay before them.

They were not long in taking advantage of their opportunity.

Roscoe Sims looked around with a startled air as he heard the bang of the scuttle cover when it struck the deck, then before his astonishing eyes Bob and Tom rose out of the hold and stood upon the deck.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," said Tom. "Sims will try to get us into trouble just as soon as we strike Grassville, which can't be a great way off now. Let's put him down in the hold and secure him. Then we won't stop at Grassville, but go on to Middleditch, which is a railroad town."

This plan suited Bob, and so the two boys advanced upon their young enemy.

"Keep off," cried Sims. "I don't want anything to do with you fellows."

"I dare say you don't," replied Bob; "but we've got a bone to pick with you just the same."

Sims started up in alarm and backed away as far as he could go without falling into the water.

"It will be worse for you if you don't let me alone."

"We'll take the chance of that," answered Bob, coolly.

Roscoe kicked out at them as soon as they got close to them.

Tom watched his chance and seizing Sims by the leg brought him down to the deck.

His head struck on the raised edge of the boat and he saw numberless stars.

"You nearly knocked my brains out," he whimpered.

"That's your fault. Why didn't you submit at once?" asked Bob.

"Because I didn't chose to."

"Don't be sassy, or we'll chuck you overboard," said Tom, with assumed fierceness.

"You wouldn't dare," returned Sims.

"Don't be too sure of that," replied Tom. "Grab him, Bob, and we'll give him a little of the same medicine he and Dexter handed out to us."

Sims struggled and kicked, but it didn't avail him any.

They caught him by his arms and legs and half dragged, half carried him forward to the hatch, into which they lowered him.

"Now we're going to shut you up, and see how you'll like it for a change."

"Just wait till I get back to Bedford and tell my father. He'll make it hot for you two."

"He'll have to catch us first," answered Tom. "Look here, Bob, I think after that threat we'd better take him out and give him a first-class licking. What do you say? We've got a fine chance. There's nobody to interfere."

"All right," agreed Bob, "unless he admits that the blowing up of the gas plant was a conspiracy on the part of Dexter and himself to ruin me."

"I'll admit nothing," replied Sims, doggedly.

"All right," said Tom, grabbing him by the collar; "then up you come for a good big licking."

"I'll kill you fellows if you don't let me alone."

"Start right in if you think you can do us up, and see who gets the worst of it."

They yanked him unceremoniously on deck again, and throwing him on his back, Tom squatted on his chest.

"Come, now, who stole my powder can from the store night before last?" demanded Bob. "You and Dexter were there nosing around. Which of you did it?"

"Find out."

"Catch him by the heels and we'll souse his head in the river till he owns up," suggested Tom.

They grabbed him by the legs and began to force him over the side of the craft.

"Help! Help! I'm being murdered!" roared Sims.



"Shout away," laughed Tom. "There's nobody around to hear you."

"Let me go, will you?"

"Not till you confess the whole details of the conspiracy to ruin me," replied Bob, firmly.

"I didn't steal your powder can," answered Roscoe, in a scared tone.

"Then Dexter did it, eh?"

Sims made no reply.

"Answer me, or over you go," cried Bob, he and Tom giving him another shove that made him shriek with fear.

"Yes, yes; he took it."

"Then you two went over to Dexter's place, laid a mine with the powder under the gas plant and blew it up. Is that a fact?"

"Yes," admitted Sims, sullenly.

"And Dexter left the can where it would be found, eh?"

"Yes."

"I thought so. A nice contemptible trick to play on a boy that never did any harm to either of you. What did you do it for?"

"It wasn't my scheme," replied Sims, sulkily.

"Well, I don't believe it was; but all the same you joined in to do me, and so you're just as guilty as Dexter."

"Dexter hates you because you've got the inside track with Flossie Bates," said Sims. "You'd better stay away from Bedford if you know when you're well off."

"That's what I mean to do; but not because I'm afraid of Dexter Drew."

"Let me up now. I've told you all I know."

"Just wait a minute," said Bob, taking out his notebook and a pencil.

He wrote down a complete confession of the gas plant conspiracy and told Sims to sign it.

"Put your name to that, and we'll let you off the whipping we were going to give you," he said.

Roscoe Sims grudgingly obeyed.

"Thanks. You've done one decent thing, at any rate. Now get into the hold."

"I don't want to get down there," objected Sims.

"I know you don't, but you've got to for the present. We'll let you out after a little while."

"You ain't treating me fair after I've owned up."

"Softy; but we can't trust you on deck while we're going by Grassville, which is just around the bend of the river. You might make trouble for us."

"I won't make any trouble."

"We can't afford to risk it," replied Bob, so much against his will Roscoe Sims stepped down into the hold, and the cover was replaced over the scuttle and secured.

Several boys playing upon one of the wharves looked at them with some astonishment, but that was all the attention they attracted.

In fifteen minutes the town was out of sight behind, and a broad level stretch of country, with a fringe of hills away in the distance, succeeded.

"I'm beginning to get hungry," said Tom. "I'd given a good deal to have been able to haul in at Grassville and hunted up a square meal."

"I'm rather sharp set myself," admitted Bob. "We must manage to run the boat ashore this side of Middle-ditch, let Sims out and walk on to town."

"What's the matter with going all the way to that place in the boat?"

"Well, I'm afraid Sims might give us trouble if we all landed there together. He's dead sore on us and would do all he could to get square."

"I guess he would. What are you going to do after you get to Middleditch? I didn't intend to go any further than Grassville, where I expected to hang around for a week; but now you're with me I don't care if I go on down to New York."

"I am not going to New York at present," replied Bob. "I'm going to try to get something to do at Middle-ditch."

"What at? Tending store?"

"No. I haven't any references to give, and it's scarcely likely I'd get a store job without some kind of recommendation."

"Then, what do you expect to do?"

"Anything that's honest."

"Shoveling dirt, for instance?" grinned Tom.

"I shouldn't refuse that as I'm now fixed."

"How much money have you?"

"About fifty or sixty cents."

"Then you've got three times as much as I have."

"So you left Bedford on less than a quarter, then?"

"Sure I did. I didn't want to spend a week or two in the lock-up for swatting Dexter Drew."

"Oh, pshaw! Your father would have got you out."

"Maybe he would if he had pull enough. If he did he'd have walloped all the dust out of my pants when he got me home."

"That'll keep till you get back," grinned Bob.

"I'm counting on him being so glad to see me back in a week or two that he'll forget all about the licking."

"I wouldn't put too much confidence in that, Tom."

"Well, then I won't go back at all," replied Tom, wagging his head.

"If I was you I'd return at once and face the music. Justice Smith can't do much to you for merely knocking Dexter down. Your father could get you off with a five-dollar fine."

"I'll go back if you do. You've got Roscoe Sims' confession. That ought to fix you up all right."

"That won't count for much, unless I could get him to swear to it before a notary. If I presented that to the

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE BOULDER ON THE TRACK.

The tall church spire and the roofs of the houses comprising the small town of Grassville now came into view around the turn in the river, and they were presently slipping past the place.



justice he'd question Sims and find out we got it from him through force. He'd say we threatened to drown him if he wouldn't sign it and he only did it to save his life. Then he'd swear there wasn't a word of truth in it. Dexter would naturally do the same. His father would scout at the idea, and where would I be against them all?"

"That's right. You wouldn't be one, two, three. Why did you make him sign it?"

"For my own satisfaction. That confession is the truth, and I only wish I could establish it as a fact."

"Then you'd go back to Bedford?"

"Yes; but I'd only stay long enough to show that I was innocent of that outrage. I'm done with Silas Oldham. He might have done something to help me out of this affair, instead of which he tried to make things look all the blacker against me."

"He's a funny kind of relative."

"I've ceased to look upon him as such. Hello! the stream is swinging us in toward yonder point. Here's a chance, I guess, to leave the boat if we want to."

"We'll have to jump for it."

"What's the odds?"

Bob went over to the hatch and threw back the scuttle cover.

"Come out, Sims, if you want to get ashore," he said.

Roscoe hastily scrambled out of his prison pen.

"Are you going to land up here on the edge of those woods?" he asked.

"We are. You can do as you please. Middleditch is a few miles further on. You can float on down there if you want to, provided the boat doesn't go ashore on a flat, or upon the bank, before you get that far."

"What do you want to land here for?" he said.

"Just for a chance to stretch our legs," replied Bob.

There wasn't time for any more conversation, for the boat was now as close in to the shore as she was likely to get, and if the boys expected to land they had to be spry about it.

So Bob took a flying leap and landed safe and dry on the earth close to the water's edge.

Tom followed him almost instantly, but Roscoe Sims hesitated, and, while he wavered the opportunity passed, and the breach between the boat and shore widened so quickly that he didn't dare make the jump, so he was carried away out into the center of the stream in a very few moments.

Bob and Tom laughed heartily at his predicament.

"I'm glad he stayed by the old hooker," remarked Bob. "I didn't want him along with us anyway."

"Neither did I. He'll be able to land at Middleditch without any trouble."

"He will if he gets there before dark."

"He ought to do that."

"You can't tell. I was down this way once in a sailboat and there's a lot of shallow spots in the stream. If the boat runs onto one of them the chances are he'll have to camp out on her all night, and maybe part of to-morrow."

"Gee! That would be great," chuckled Tom. "It would take some of the starch out of him."

"Well, I don't wish him any hard luck," said Bob, as they climbed up the bank and stood there a few moments watching Roscoe Sims and the flat-boat fade out of sight around a bend in the stream.

"There's a house yonder," said Tom, a few minutes later, as they were tramping across a stubble field. "Let's go there and strike 'em for something to eat. I'm most starved."

"I'm with you. I could tackle most anything in the eating line just now; but whether we'll get anything is another question."

"I could chew on a sandwich if it was as hard as a ten-penny nail," grinned Tom.

It proved to be a farmhouse, and when they made known their wants the woman very kindly set about the half-starved boys what they considered a sumptuous meal.

When they ate as much as they could, which was considerable, by the way, they offered to pay for the meal, but the woman wouldn't hear of it and told them they were quite welcome to the food.

Thanking her, they set off again, after getting the direction of the highway to Middleditch.

"I'm feeling like a bird," said Tom. "I never tasted anything quite so good in my life before."

"Same here," answered Bob. "A square meal, when a fellow is dead hungry, is all to the good."

"Bet your whiskers it is," warbled Tom.

It was coming on dusk now, and the boys missed the road some way and struck the railroad track.

"This leads to Middleditch all right. Let's walk the ties," suggested Tom.

"If anybody saw us they might take us for a couple of actors," chuckled Bob.

"Ho! I guess we don't look much like actors. We're too young, to begin with."

"That's so."

They walked along, and in the course of an hour reacquired a cut which circled around toward the river.

It was almost dark, and the quiet country neighborhood was getting noisy with the croak of the frog and other all-night disturbers.

Suddenly they came upon a big boulder standing in the middle of the track.

The boys could easily see that it had recently become loosened from near the top of the cut and had rolled down and landed where it now stood.

Of course, it was a fearful menace to any train bound north from Middleditch.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Bob, coming to a pause in front of it. "Look at that!"

"Suffering beeswax!" gasped Tom. "If a train was to hit that in this place there'd be a wreck as sure as you live!"

"We never could move that thing," said Bob. "We



must hustle ahead and see if we can't find a trackwalker or somebody that will warn the railroad people."

"That's what we'll have to do. I hope no train is due round this time."

As if in very mockery of that well-intentioned wish, the shrill scream of a locomotive whistle was borne to their ears at that moment from the direction of Middleditch.

A train was coming toward them on the very track obstructed by the boulder.

It was a thrilling moment for the two boys.

## CHAPTER IX.

### BOB SAVES THE EXPRESS.

"My goodness! There is a train coming this way on this track!" gasped Tom. "What are we going to do now? We'd better run forward as fast as we can and holler to the engineer."

"I don't think he'd notice us in the dark."

"But the train has got to be stopped, or there'll be a smash-up."

"The thing is how to stop it in time," said Bob, cudgeling his brains for an idea.

"I can hear the hum on the rails now," cried Tom, greatly excited.

"Something must be done," exclaimed Bob. "By George! I'll try it," he added, peeling off his jacket, and then fairly tearing the shirt from his back.

"Try what?" asked Tom, eagerly.

"I'm going to try to make a torch."

"A torch! How?"

"Out of my shirt. I'm going to set fire to it and run down the track waving it."

"That's a fine idea."

Bob rolled the shirt up tight and then ignited it with a match.

He whirled it around his head till it burst into a bright blaze, then he started down the track at full speed.

The train was coming on at a smart rate.

The whistle had signalled a crossing two miles ahead.

In a moment or two the engine came in view, or, rather, the headlight did, and Bob began to yell at the top of his voice and wave his improvised torch as he ran.

The engineer saw him at once, and, believing something was wrong, shut off steam and whistled down brakes, at the same time setting the air-brakes, and the wheels began to grind at reduced speed along the track.

Bob jumped from the track and the engine swept by him, coming to a stop at the entrance to the cut, within a few feet of the boulder.

The conductor leaped out of the baggage car and came forward.

Bob saw by the long line of Pullman coaches that the

train was an express and breathed a sigh of thankfulness that he had been able to stop it in time.

"What's the trouble, boy?" asked the conductor gruffly of Bob.

"There's a big boulder on the track right ahead of you in the cut."

The conductor went forward with his lantern, followed by Bob.

When he saw the rock he was nearly paralyzed.

His experience told him what a narrow escape the train had had.

"My boy," he said, turning to Bob and grasping him warmly by the hand, "you have averted a terrible catastrophe by your presence of mind. The vice-president of the road must know under what obligations everybody on board the train is to you. Come with me. His private car is attached on at the rear."

Two minutes later Bob was introduced to the vice-president and was telling his story, while the conductor hurried ahead to have the crew of the train remove the boulder.

"You shall be rewarded for this, young man," said the vice-president, energetically. "What is your name, and where do you live?"

"My name is Bob Baxter. I don't live anywhere at present. I have just left my late home in Bedford village, some miles up the river, and am now striking out for myself in the world."

"Are you going to New York?"

"I may, if I do not find anything to do in Middleditch."

"Then here is my card. I will be back in New York in a month and will be glad to see you at my office. If you decide to remain in Middleditch send me your address, for the company will certainly reward you for saving its property and the lives of its passengers. We should have hit that rock at a sixty-mile an hour rate and a terrible calamity must have taken place. Allow me now to present you on the part of myself, my family and friends with this small testimony of the appreciation we feel for the service you have rendered us."

With that he handed Bob a hundred dollar bill.

"I am very much obliged to you, sir. I didn't expect any reward for doing a plain duty."

"The company will reward you in a more suitable manner. Now don't fail either to call on me thirty days from to-day or send me your permanent address."

With those words he dismissed Bob, who was tickled to death over the big bill he had in his pocket.

But he wasn't allowed to escape yet.

The intelligence of the narrow escape the train had had and how a boy had saved it from a smash-up flew through the train, and the sum of \$500 was soon collected by a prominent trust magnate who was a passenger and turned over to the conductor to hand to Bob as a testimony of gratitude on the part of the passengers.

As soon as the obstruction was removed from the track



the train proceeded on its way, leaving the two boys to continue their journey to Middleditch.

"Say, you're in great luck!" exclaimed Tom, who had seen the conductor hand his companion the roll of bills. "How much did you get for saving the train?"

"The conductor said there was about \$500 in the wad," grinned Bob.

"What are you going to do with all that money?" asked Tom, rather enviously.

"Well, to begin with, I'm going to give you some of it," replied Bob, generously.

"Oh, I guess I ain't entitled to any of it," answered Tom, wistfully eying the indistinct bunch of bills Bob held in his fist as they stood near the entrance to the cut.

"Yes, you are."

"How am I? I didn't do anything. Just stood by and looked on."

"Well, we're side partners any way. I've got about \$600 altogether. I'm going to give you \$200 of it."

"Oh, I say, that's too much," cried Tom, touched by his companion's generosity. "One hundred is lots."

"I said two hundred," insisted Bob; "and two hundred goes. You'll be able to pay your own fine now when you get back to Bedford and give your father some of it. That'll save you from a whipping for getting into trouble and then running away."

"That's right," cried Tom, gleefully. "I can make myself solid with the old man with a fifty dollar bill. Bob, you're a brick!" and he shook his companion warmly by the hand. "How far have we got to walk to reach Middleditch?"

"Fifteen miles," replied Bob.

"The deuce you say!" gasped Tom. "Why that'll take us all night."

"I'm not going to do it to-night."

"What then? Sleep out in the woods?"

"No. The conductor told me there's a village called Coldstream about two miles back from the railroad. We'll go there and stop at the small hotel. Now that we've money in our clothes, we can afford to put on a little style," with a chuckle.

"That suits me all right," grinned Tom, and the boys struck off in the direction of the village in question.

The path led them through a small wood, and half way through they came to a babbling rivulet, where they stopped to slake their thirst.

While they were drinking Bob heard voices close at hand.

They were rough voices, and the boy judged they belonged to a couple of tramps.

He parted the bushes and looked down into a little gully, where he saw the speakers seated before a fire they had kindled to cook a mess of fish they had probably caught in some nearby stream.

Bob didn't like the looks of the two men very much, and he motioned to Tom to keep quiet.

One of the men had a bag by his side, but what it contained Bob couldn't guess.

"It's settled, then, that we do the job to-night," one of the men was saying.

"Of course. The old man who watches the mill is half deaf. The safe is full of money to pay off the hands to-morrow. If we're goin' to do it at all it must be done to-night."

"Well, I've got the tools that'll make short work of the safe, for I don't suppose it's more'n an ordinary one. Once we get the money we can cross over into the next State and make off. You managed to get the lay of the buildin' in a mighty cute way," said the man, with a short laugh. "It was great luck our meetin' with the very chap that put up the buildin', and a few glasses of licker set his tongue waggin' in the right direction. Why, you even got him to draw a plan of the office floor on the second story."

"That's what we wanted, wasn't it?" grinned his companion.

"Sure it was. Let's take a look at it."

The other drew a piece of paper from his pocket, spread it out on his knee and they examined it together.

"That's the entrance," said the man who had the plan, "and here's the hall. Beyond is the main workroom."

"And what's this?" asked his pal.

"That is a little corridor between the workrooms. There are two doors. One leads into the main shop——"

"And the other?" asked his companion, eagerly.

"Opens into the office. Here are the windows; there's the desk——"

"Who's desk?"

"Why, the manager's, of course."

"Ain't there no other windows but them there?"

"No."

"Where's the safe?"

"That cross there represents the safe."

"Good enough. It's on the blind side of the buildin', and nobody'll be able to see us in the office. What a soft old chap that architect was."

"He was just honest enough not to suspect us, and not sober enough to keep his mouth shut. I flattered him to the queen's taste, and he was willin' to do anything for us."

"You worked him all right, Jim. You're the boy that's got the gift of gab when it counts. The factory is off by itself, isn't it?"

"Yes. It's all of a block from the nearest house."

"And there's nobody 'round but the watchman, eh?"

"So the architect said, and I judged he told the truth."

"It'll be a regular open and shut game, won't it?" said the other, taking the cooked fish off the fire and spreading them out on the top of a log.

"That's what it will," replied Jim, taking out one of the fish and beginning to tear it to pieces with his teeth.

"We ought to be able to do up the watchman in no time at all," said the other, helping himself to a fish.

"We'll put him to sleep for an hour or two, and he'll



never know what's goin' on. I ain't seen such a snap as this in many a year."

"How much money do you think there is in the safe?"

"Must be a couple of thousand at least. It'll be a fine haul for us."

The men continued to eat and talk until they had finished their meal; then they got up, stamped out the fire and prepared to take their departure from the spot.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE ROBBERY OF THE MILL.

Bob drew back out of the bushes and looked at Tom.

"Did you hear what they said?" he asked in suppressed excitement.

"Every word," whispered Tom.

"They're going to rob some mill to-night."

"That's plain enough. Where do you suppose it is?"

"I haven't any idea, unless it's in the village beyond here."

"I'll bet that's where it is. We must follow those chaps and put a spoke in their wheel."

"It will not be easy to follow them in the dark, so that they won't get on to us."

"We must do the best we can."

Bob stuck his head through the bushes again.

"They've lit their pipes and are having a smoke."

"I thought they were about to make a move."

"So did I. We must wait here till they go on, and then try and trail them to the building they're going to break into."

"Then what'll we do?"

"As soon as they get to work one of us must watch them while the other goes and gives the alarm."

"We must be cautious, for they're pretty tough-looking roosters. I wouldn't care to have a run-in with them. I'll bet they've got revolvers stowed away somewhere about them."

"Most likely they have. Hush! They're coming this way."

The boys drew back into the bushes, and presently the would-be burglars passed within a yard of their place of concealment.

As soon as they were a little distance ahead Bob and his companion followed them.

The rascals took the path that soon brought them to the county road leading to the village of Coldstream.

Bob and Tom then slunk along in the shadow of the hedge and just far enough in their rear to keep them constantly in sight.

The men walked leisurely along the lonesome road smoking their pipes, apparently in no hurry to reach their destination.

The short, chunky fellow, whose name was Bill, carried the bag containing their kit of tools.

In twenty minutes they came to the first straggling houses of the village.

As soon as they struck the head of Main street the men paused and held a consultation, after which they struck off to the right.

The boys followed.

"If we only knew where the Constable lived, or was certain there was only one mill in this place, one of us could start ahead and give the alarm while the other followed these chaps to their destination," said Bob.

"We'll have to wait till we find out just where they are bound. Then while they're at work we ought to have time enough to hunt up enough of the villagers to capture them in the very act."

This seemed to be the better way to carry out their plans, so Bob adopted it.

Coldstream was only a small place in point of population, but it covered a lot of ground.

It had only one street, bordered on both sides with big oak trees.

Apparently there was but a single church, a red brick building with a short spire, which stood in front of the graveyard on the suburbs.

The burglars led them past it as they skirted the village.

The boys thought the walk a never-ending one, but at last they made out a big brick building at the opposite end of the place where they had entered, and before which the rascals came to a pause and began to reconnoiter the premises.

"That's the mill," cried Bob, excitedly. "That's the building they're going to rob."

"I guess it is," replied Tom.

"Then there's no time to be lost. You run down to that house yonder, or to a store if you see one open not too far away, and tell the first man you meet what's up. Tell him to rouse up the Constable and several men. They must arm themselves and hasten to the mill here as fast as they can. I'll stay and watch till you come back."

"Keep in the shade, Bob. Don't get into trouble while I'm away."

"Don't worry about me. The rascals have disappeared around the corner of the mill. They're looking for the watchman. Now be off," and Bob gave his companion a push.

As soon as he was alone Bob crept around to the back of the mill, but the burglars were not in sight.

"I wonder if they've got inside already?" he breathed.

He didn't dare to go any closer to investigate, but contented himself with keeping a bright watch on the rear door of the mill.

Ten minutes passed and no developments.

"Evidently they've got in all right," he muttered.

Just then he saw the flash of a light through one of the second story windows.



"I'll bet that's them. I wonder if that's the office where the safe is with the money?"

He couldn't tell, of course, but he grew more and more nervous and impatient as time passed and there was no sign of Tom or a party of the villagers.

Silence and gloom reigned all around, for the moon, if there was any that night, had not yet risen.

It is true the silence was not absolute, for the frogs and the night insects were in full tune, but that was the sum total of the sounds which came to the boy's ears.

He saw the flash of light at occasional intervals through the same window, so he judged that the burglars were at their nefarious work.

Bob had never been brought to regard crime so closely before, and the sensation was not a pleasant one for the boy.

"Seems to me it is taking Tom all night to attend to his part of the business," thought Bob, impatiently.

He forgot that time seemed longer to him than it really was.

Every minute seemed equal to five to him as he fretted and fumed at the apparent delay of his comrade in executing his mission.

As a matter of fact, Tom was not letting the grass grow under his feet at all.

He didn't stop at the first house, it is true, for it was dark and silent, and he was afraid he would lose too much time waking the people up, for he guessed they had gone to bed.

He kept on down the shady street till he came to the only hotel the village boasted.

He rushed into the place, where a number of men were playing at pool.

Asking for the proprietor, his excited manner naturally attracted notice, especially as he was recognized as a stranger.

When the owner of the hotel appeared Tom told him about the visit of the burglars and their designs on the mill.

As soon as the hotel man was satisfied of the truth of Tom's story, he put on his hat, and accompanied by the boy, started for the Constable's house, a few blocks away.

That individual was soon made acquainted with the state of affairs, and he started to gather a posse of his fellow-citizens to capture the rascals.

He made his first call at the home of the manager of the mill, which was not a great distance away, and soon things were in shape to start for the mill.

In the meantime Bob hung around the building bubbling over with anxiety and impatience.

The full degradation and recklessness of crime was revealed to him.

In the office of the mill at that moment were two callous-hearted human beings bent on robbing their fellow-creatures, and even desperate enough, he felt sure, to kill whoever opposed their evil designs.

There was only one place in his estimation for such

hardened malefactors, and that was the State prison, where it would be out of their power to do any harm.

At last, to Bob's great relief, he saw a crowd of people approaching the mill.

"Now we'll have the rascals all right," he exclaimed gleefully.

The burglars, however, had about completed their work.

One of them, happening to look out of the window, saw the crowd of villagers coming toward the mill.

He immediately gave the alarm.

"We're discovered, Jim," he cried. "Jump out of the window and I'll hand down the stuff."

Bob saw the back window raised at this exciting moment, and one of the burglars let himself down with a run.

On the spur of the moment the boy determined to cut off his escape.

Either the shock of contact with the ground, or the sight of Bob rushing at him, unnerved the rascal, for without waiting to receive the booty he fled as fast as his heels would permit him.

"Catch the bag, Jim," cried the voice of Bill above, just as Bob started to follow the crook, and like a flash the situation dawned upon him.

In the darkness the other rascal had mistaken him for his pal.

So Bob lifted up his hands and caught the descending object in his hands.

Then as Bill came scrambling down immediately afterward, Bob gave him a rap on the head that stretched him upon the ground.

In a moment they were engaged in a furious struggle for the mastery.

## CHAPTER XI.

### MORE MONEY COMES BOB'S AND TOM'S WAY.

"Let go, you little fool!" gritted the rascal, as he endeavored to drag himself free from the plucky boy's grip.

Bob, however, clung to him tenaciously, determined to hold on at any cost until the help that was coming arrived on the scene.

"Confound you, it will be worse for you if you don't let go," roared the burglar furiously, for he also knew that a crowd of the villagers were coming and that unless he got away soon he would presently be a prisoner.

Bob didn't waste his breath in replying.

He simply clung to the fellow for all he was worth.

They rolled over and over on the ground, the man trying in vain to hit his young adversary in such a way as would cause him to let up.

The first to appear at the back of the mill was Tom Leonard.

He saw what was going on and he threw himself upon the burglar's feet.

That settled the fate of the rascal and he lay back pant-



ing on the earth, conscious it was all over but the march to the village lock-up, and the subsequent proceedings, which would land him in the State prison.

He swore roundly, and told Bob he would get even with him some day; but that threat didn't worry the boy for a cent.

Burglar Bill would be provided with free board and lodging for many moons to come, and when he did get out it was dollars to doughnuts he never would come across Bob again in his life.

The Constable and his crowd now came up, and to him Bob turned over his prisoner, and was duly complimented for his plucky conduct.

Mr. George, the company's manager, rushed into the mill, followed by several of the crowd.

"Where's the other chap?" asked the Constable of Bob. "There were two of 'em, weren't there?"

"Yes. He got away a few minutes ago."

"Which way did he go?"

"That way," replied the boy, pointing out the direction.

The Constable spoke to several of his people and they started off to try and find the rascal, which, however, they did not succeed in doing.

In a few minutes Mr. George came out of the mill with a troubled countenance.

He approached the Constable.

"I understand that one of the rascals has escaped," he said.

"We may catch him yet."

"It is to be hoped you will. You didn't find anything on this man, did you?"

"Not a thing."

"Too bad. Too bad. They got the safe open and completely rifled it. The other man must have carried off the booty."

"I guess not, sir," now spoke up Bob. "This chap threw a bag out of the window just before he came down himself and I caught it. Then I tried to capture him, and I had the fight of my life to hold him till help came."

"Where is this bag he threw at you?" asked the manager, eagerly.

"Here it is where I dropped it, right under the window."

Bob ran forward, grabbed the bag and dragged it before Mr. George.

The manager quickly turned its contents out, and packages of paper money came to light.

"Thank heaven!" he ejaculated, with a sigh of relief. "The money is here. My lad, I am under the greatest obligation to you. We had \$2,500 in the safe to-night, to pay the men off to-morrow, as well as sundry other expenses. It would have sadly crippled the company if we had lost it, as we have an unusual amount of money out at this time. I will see that you are suitably rewarded for saving our property."

"I don't want any reward, sir," said Bob, who thought he had made enough in that line for one night.

"But you deserve it, young man, and I shall not permit you to go without having received some compensation for your plucky conduct. What is your name, and where do you live? I see you are a stranger in Coldstream."

"Bob Baxter is my name. I have been living in Bedford, but I am now on my way to Middleditch. My companion and I merely came to Coldstream to pass the night, as we didn't feel like walking fifteen miles in the dark."

"Come upstairs with me, both of you. I want to talk with you," said the manager.

The boys, when they entered the office, saw that the burglars had blown off the door of the safe, which lay on its back on the carpet.

The contents of the various drawers of the desks had been turned out in search for articles of value.

Everything was in the greatest disorder, for the work had been hurried.

The manager bade the boys sit down and tell him how they had discovered that the mill was going to be robbed.

Bob told the whole story, from the moment they had encountered the two rascals eating their supper in the wood.

"Well, you are bright boys, both of you; but chiefly to you, Master Baxter, is due the recovery of our money. I shall therefore insist that you will accept \$200 for your services this night, while your friend shall have \$100."

He counted out the money and presented the bills to the boys, who received them with some reluctance and many thanks.

"You will be the company's guests at the hotel to-night and as long as you choose to stay in the village," continued Mr. George.

"You are very kind, sir," replied Bob. "But we shall start for Middleditch after breakfast to-morrow morning."

"I am sorry that you can't stay a day or two with us. Our president and directors, who all live in the village, would be glad to see and have a talk with you."

"Well, I'll postpone our departure until after dinner if you really wish us to meet them."

"I should consider it a favor if you will."

"All right," replied Bob. "I guess it's time we went on to the hotel."

"I'll go along with you and introduce you to the proprietor."

Half an hour later Bob and Tom were in the best room in the hotel.

"Gee whiz!" exclaimed Tom. "We've fallen on our feet in great shape. Getting out of Bedford has been the making of us. How long would it have taken you to get hold of \$600 or I \$200 if we had stayed in our village? Say, I don't want to go back, if this is a sample of what I'm going to be up against."

Bob laughed heartily at his friend.

"Why, you don't expect to help save railroad trains and capture village burglars as a regular thing, do you?"



"No. But something else is sure to turn up to bring money into our pockets."

"What makes you think so?" grinned Bob.

"Oh, I feel it in my bones."

"Tom, you're getting a big head, that's all."

"Oh, you get out. My head isn't any bigger than yours."

"Isn't it?" chuckled Bob. "Then my eyes must deceive me."

"Come, now, what are you giving me?" objected Tom, good-naturedly.

"Nothing at all. You've got enough for one night. Get into bed now and sleep off the effects of a too sudden accumulation of wealth."

Bob doused the light, and in a little while both of the young adventurers were in the land of dreams

## CHAPTER XII.

### BOB TAKES THE PART OF A VERY PRETTY YOUNG MISS.

The news of the attempted burglary at the mill spread all over the village in no time next morning, and it seemed as if half of the male population of the place found occasion to call at the hotel to stare at Bob and Tom after they had finished a tip-top breakfast and were sitting like lords on the piazza enjoying the fragrant breeze.

"Say," grinned Tom, noticing a bunch of open-mouthed rustics taking them in from the other side of the street, "we're getting to be some pumpkins, aren't we, Bob?"

"Sure," laughed Bob. "How do you enjoy the sensation?"

"Tip-top."

Just then the proprietor of the hotel came out with a red-headed man in tow.

"This is Mr. Heyman, the editor of our local paper. He wishes to talk with you about last night's affair."

Mr. Heyman yanked out a note-book and said he would be glad to have their account of the robbery for the story he was writing up for next day's issue.

Bob graciously obliged him.

"Do you boys drink or smoke?" asked the Coldstream editor, closing his note-book.

"No, sir," replied Bob, promptly.

"You'll take a glass of soda or sarsaparilla, won't you? It's my treat."

"We only just finished breakfast, and must therefore decline your invitation," answered Bob.

Mr. Heyman, who regarded himself as one of the great men of the village, then took his departure, after inviting the boys to visit the office of the Weekly Blade.

An hour later a messenger arrived from the manager of the mill asking the boys to go there, as the president and other directors were on hand waiting to see them

Bob told the story of the night's adventures once more

to the proprietors of the mill, and both he and Tom received an official vote of thanks for what they had done for the company's interests.

After dinner a team came up to the hotel and the boys were told that Mr. George had sent it to take them to Middleditch.

"Say, this is all right, isn't it, Bob?" exclaimed Tom, as they stepped into the vehicle.

"I should think it was. We've been having a much better time than Roscoe Sims, don't you think?"

"Well, I should remark. I wonder if he reached Middleditch all right last night? I'd laugh if he got stuck on one of the flats in the river you were telling about."

"Perhaps we'll find out when we get to town. However, I hope we don't meet him, for like as not it would lead to trouble."

They reached Middleditch about four o'clock, and went to a cheap hotel until they had settled upon their plans for the future.

Next morning the boys noticed several advertisements in the newspapers, any one of which they thought they could fill the requirements of, so after an early breakfast they started off in different directions to try their luck.

It was Saturday and Bob hoped he would catch on to something for the coming week.

He didn't succeed, however, and by noon had exhausted the different places that wanted a boy.

He went into a restaurant for his lunch, and then started off to see if he could drum up a job.

Nothing came of his efforts, and he was descending the third flight of stairs in a very ordinary kind of office building when something happened that called his chivalrous nature into action.

Bob turned into the corridor in time to see a shabby, sour-faced old man rush up to a pretty miss of fifteen who had just come out of one of the offices.

The startled girl uttered a smothered shriek and tried to run.

But the man grabbed her by the arm, and raising his umbrella in a threatening manner, cried:

"I've caught you, you sly minx! Now hand over your wages, or——"

"Stop!" shouted Bob, dashing forward and seizing his uplifted arm.

The old man turned angrily on Bob.

"How dare you interfere!" he cried, with an ugly flash in his eyes.

"I won't stand to see you strike that girl," replied Bob, resolutely. "Let her go."

"This is my niece, and I'll do as I chose with her."

"Oh, I guess not," answered Bob, coolly. "Not while I'm around you won't."

"I'll have you arrested!" shrieked the infuriated old fellow, making an effort to hit Bob with his umbrella.

"All right. Why don't you?" retorted Bob.

He grabbed the man's wrist and compelled him to let the girl go.



"Now if you want to have it out with me pitch in," went on the boy, defiantly, while the girl shrank away and regarded her defender with grateful eyes.

The man sputtered and jabbered incoherently, and seemed as if he was going to have a fit.

"Give me that money!" he shouted at the girl.

"I will not give you a cent. You only want to spend it in liquor," she replied stoutly.

"Then I'll fix you when you come home," he cried, malignantly.

He turned on his heel and made off downstairs.

"I'm very much obliged to you," said the pretty miss, turning to Bob, "and I am very sorry you got into trouble on my account."

"Don't mention it," he replied, politely. "If you wish me to see you home I will be glad to accompany you; but if I were you I'd go to some friend's house until your uncle has cooled down. I shouldn't like to think that I had left you at the mercy of such an unreasonable old man."

"You are very kind; but my mother will protect me. He won't dare to carry out his threat."

"I am glad to hear that," replied Bob, with an air of relief. "Perhaps, then, it isn't necessary for me to see you home."

"I don't know," she answered. "He might be waiting for me on the street, and he's ugly enough just now to make a scene, and that would be just dreadful."

"Very well, then, I am entirely at your service."

"I don't like to trouble you," she said, hesitatingly.

"It's no trouble at all, miss. Do you mind telling me your name?"

"Ada Bates."

"Mine is Bob Baxter."

She smiled.

"I will remember it," she answered.

"I have a very good friend named Flossie Bates," began Bob.

"Flossie Bates!" she exclaimed. "Why, I have a cousin named Flossie Bates. She lives in the village of Bedford, up the river."

"Why, that's the girl I mean," said Bob, delightedly. "Her father is the head Constable of the village."

"Yes, that's right," said the girl, with a pleased expression, regarding her new acquaintance in quite a different light. "So you really know my cousin Flossie. Do you live at Bedford?"

"I have lived there for a good many years; but I've left there to strike out for myself where there's more chance to get up in the world."

"Well, I'm awful glad to know you, Mr. Baxter. I shall certainly write at once to Flossie and let her know how bravely you defended me against my crabbed old uncle, who is the black sheep of the family. Do you expect to remain in Middleditch?"

"I can't say whether I will or not."

"I do hope you will," she said, eagerly.

They were now walking along the street, but there was no sign of the young lady's uncle, much to her relief.

"It will depend on whether I can get anything to do here or not."

"You ought to be able to get a situation, for this is a real live town. You might board at our house if you cared to. Mother has just lost her regular boarder."

"If your mother could take my friend, Tom, also, we might consider it."

"I will ask her. Does your friend come from Bedford, also?"

"Yes. He is also well acquainted with your cousin."

"Mother will be very glad to see you both. It's some time since we've seen anyone from Bedford. Neither my uncle Andrew nor Flossie has visited us in over a year. I think that's real mean, considering the distance between here and Bedford is not so far."

"Perhaps you owe them a visit," smiled Bob.

"Oh, I'm working all the time. I can't get away."

"Not even on Sunday?" laughed Bob.

"I have to help mother on Sunday."

"Well, if I come to board with you, I'll try and persuade your mother to let you go to Bedford some Sunday."

Ada laughed, and soon after they reached her home.

Bob was very graciously received by Mrs. Bates as soon as Ada explained that he came from Bedford, was well acquainted with Cousin Flossie, and, further, that he had saved her from a very embarrassing situation in the building where she was employed.

Mrs. Bates was very indignant when she heard how her brother had acted toward her daughter, and remarked that she would have it out with him when he came home.

Bob was invited to remain to supper and accepted, but he wouldn't remain any longer, as he said his friend Tom was waiting for him at the hotel where they were stopping.

## CHAPTER XIII.

BOB GOES TO NEW YORK CITY AND RECEIVES \$5,000.

When Bob got back to the hotel he found Tom waiting impatiently for his return.

"Well, did you catch on to something?" was Tom's first query.

Bob shook his head.

"Nothing doing," he said. "How about yourself?"

"I landed the first place on my list," grinned Tom.

"It's in a feed store."

"You're lucky."

"If you didn't hit anything what kept you away so long?"

Bob told him of his adventure in the office building, which led to his becoming acquainted with Flossie Bates's cousin Ada.



"Is she pretty?" inquired Tom, growing interested at once.

"As a peach," replied his friend.

"Going to introduce me, aren't you?"

"Sure. I'm thinking of boarding with her mother. The room will accommodate two. I suppose you're with me?"

"Bet your life I am."

"All right. We'll go up there to-morrow night to tea. I promised to come, and said I'd bring you. The only trouble is that Flossie's father, when he hears that I am in Middleditch, may feel compelled by his duty as Constable to communicate with the police here and have me arrested and held till he can come down and take me to the jail at Beavertown in accordance with Justice Smith's orders."

"That would be tough."

"Well, I should say so. But Flossie will put up a stiff fight against anything like that, and her father won't be over anxious to find me. I believe he'll keep his hands off unless Squire Drew forces things to an issue."

The boys took the room at Mrs. Bates's house, and Tom was greatly struck with Ada Bates.

She was lively and winsome in her ways, and that just suited Tom, who had no fear of rivalry on Bob's part, for he knew there was only one girl in the world for whom Bob cared, and that was Flossie.

They heard nothing more from Roscoe Sims.

That lad, however, had been taken off the flat-boat, after she had stuck all night on a flat in the river, and he returned to Bedford Saturday morning, where he reported to Dexter that he believed Bob Baxter and Tom Leonard were in Middleditch.

Dexter told his father.

The squire then visited Constable Bates and gave him the information, telling him he expected that he would telephone the police of Middleditch to be on the lookout for the two fugitives.

Andrew Bates reluctantly did so.

Later the news spread over the village that Bob and Tom had saved the Chicago Limited express the night before from a terrible disaster at the railroad cut.

The receipt of that intelligence caused a complete revulsion of public sentiment in Bob's favor, and the majority of the villagers, who had always liked the boy, began to regard him now as the victim of an unfortunate train of circumstances.

Flossie received a letter from Ada containing an account of her meeting with Bob Baxter in the building where she was employed, detailing how he had come to her rescue when attacked by her uncle William, and wound up by stating that Bob and his friend Tom Leonard were now stopping at her house.

On receipt of this Flossie lost no time in sending Bob a note under cover to Ada, advising him that her father had notified the Middleditch police to look out for him and Tom, and suggested that, until he felt he could vol-

untarily return to Bedford with some proof of his innocence, he had better leave Middleditch at once.

Bob received the note Wednesday morning after Tom had left for the store where he was employed, and, believing Flossie's advice good, he notified Mrs. Bates that he had decided to leave town, without stating where he expected to go.

He left a note for Tom, telling him the circumstances, and stating that he had taken a train for New York and would write him in a day or two.

Bob arrived in the metropolis in the afternoon and went to a small hotel on the European plan.

Next morning he caught a job through an evening paper, and that night wrote a letter to Tom, telling him that he had taken a room in a lodging house on Twenty-sixth street.

The position that Bob obtained was office boy in a Twenty-third street printing office, and his chief duty was to carry envelopes containing proofs, as well as packages of printed matter, to customers of the establishment.

He took advantage of his first chance to deposit his \$600 in a savings bank, and with this snug sum to his credit he naturally felt a bit independent.

He also kept the request of the vice-president of the railroad company in mind, and, after thirty days, he notified that gentleman where he could be addressed in New York.

The result was he received a letter from the big official requesting him to call at the executive offices of the New York, Buffalo & Chicago Railroad Company as soon as he could make it convenient to do so.

He got off one afternoon for that purpose and presented himself at the offices in question, asking for the vice-president.

His name was carried inside by an attendant, who came back and told him to follow him.

He presently found himself in the presence of the gentleman who had given him the \$100 on the private car the night he saved the express.

"I am very glad to see you again, young man," said the vice-president, whose name was Austin, shaking hands with his visitor. "Do you expect to remain in the city?"

"I think I shall stay here for some time, sir."

"You have a situation, then, I presume?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are you satisfied with it?"

"I should prefer a position where I could hope for advancement if I deserved it."

"I can place you on our road. You will then be in the line of promotion according as your ability warrants it. I can send you to our superintendent of construction, who has an opening for a clerk. Or I can give you a position in our yard here, and if you are smart there is nothing to prevent you rising through the different grades to a superintendency eventually."

"I think I should prefer a situation in the yard," replied Bob.



"Very well. I will attend to the matter and write you in a day or two. You had better give your present employer notice of your intention to leave him in a week."

"I will do so."

The vice-president then drew an envelope from his desk.

"At a meeting of the directors of the company the other day I presented the facts about the narrow escape of the Chicago Limited at the cut north of Middleditch. The thanks of the company and the sum of \$5,000 were voted you. This envelope contains a check for the amount and the official recognition of your services signed by the president of the road. It gives me great pleasure to hand them to you."

Bob was taken by surprise, and hardly knew what to say.

Finally he managed to stammer out his thanks.

"The obligation is all on the company's side, young man. You not only saved many lives, but the company a great many damage suits."

With these words the vice-president turned to his desk, and this was a signal that the interview was over.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### BOB PROVES HIMSELF A HERO ONCE MORE.

A week later Bob went to work in the yards of the New York, Buffalo & Chicago Railroad Company.

He commenced at the lowest round of the ladder, and his future prospects were in his own hands.

He got right down to business and applied himself to his duties with such zeal that he soon attracted the favorable notice of his superiors.

His good nature and willingness to oblige ere long made him very popular among his fellow-workers, and when, after a few months, he received promotion which carried him over the heads of many of the old hands there wasn't a kick heard in the yard.

He corresponded regularly with Tom, who remained at Middleditch in spite of the fact that the action for assault on Dexter Drew had been fixed up and his father wanted him to come home, and through Tom he wrote to and received letters from Flossie.

He sent her the signed confession of Roscoe Sims to see what it would amount to, but it met the fate that Bob supposed it would.

Both Dexter and Roscoe denied the truth, and Justice Smith said it amounted to nothing, as it had been obtained by threats of personal violence.

The contents of the letter leaked out among the villagers, and they were satisfied that Bob was innocent of the charge which had been brought against him.

The strong personal animosity exhibited toward the fugitive by Squire Drew, his son Dexter and Roscoe Sims

had a significant look to the people of Bedford after they became familiar with the contents of Sims's enforced confession.

Of course no one dared express his private convictions in public, lest they reach the ears of Squire Drew, but it is safe to say that the larger portion of the inhabitants of Bedford believed that Bob Baxter had been unfairly dealt with.

A year elapsed since the time when Bob and Tom made their hasty departure from Bedford village, and Bob was progressing famously in his work as a railroad employee.

He had saved a good deal of his wages and had now nearly \$6,000 on deposit in two city savings banks.

For some time he had been looking out for a good real estate investment, as he believed his money could be put to better use than keeping it in the banks at four per cent. interest.

At length the opportunity he wished for presented itself.

A builder had erected three two-family houses in a good location in the Bronx and had sold one of them when he died suddenly, leaving his affairs in such a complicated state that the other two had to be sold at a sacrifice in order to settle up his business.

Bob decided if he could get them for \$5,900, the amount he had on deposit, he would make a good thing out of the deal.

But in order to do this it was necessary that he should have a legal guardian to act for him.

So he went to see Mr. Austin, the vice-president of the railroad company, and asked his advice in the matter.

That gentleman, who had a very favorable opinion of the boy, and had kept himself posted on Bob's record in the yard, promised to attend to the matter for him.

He ascertained after some correspondence that the two houses could be got for the price Bob was able to pay and took an option on them for the boy.

Then he went before one of the courts and had a certain trust company appointed guardian to the young railroad employee.

All details having been arranged, Bob drew his money and turned it over to the trust company, which then put the deal through, and, as the lad's representative, became the owner of the two houses in question.

Within three months an offer of \$7,500 was made for the two houses, which were occupied by four families at a good rental, but Bob refused to sell.

It was about this time that Bob was temporarily transferred to the construction department, and was ordered to take charge of the relaying of the company's tracks between Middleditch and Beavertown.

Bob would have steered clear of this assignment if he could have managed it in any reasonable way, as he feared it might lead to trouble for himself, for he knew the old charge of blowing up Squire Drew's gas plant still hung over his head, and there were chances that somebody



from Bedford might recognize him along the road and carry the information of his whereabouts to the squire.

Not being able to frame any valid excuse that would hold water with the chief of construction, he departed from the yards for his new scene of action.

If he had to face the music he would do so like a little man.

He knew he could depend on the vice-president of the company to stand at his back in case of trouble.

He had been bossing the tracklaying job for about ten days, and was congratulating himself on the fact that none of the Bedford people had come anywhere near the stretch of track where he was employed, when all his bright hopes were suddenly shattered by the appearance one afternoon at the railroad crossing where his gang were working of a carriage driven by Dexter Drew, and in which were also seated Roscoe Sims and Dexter's mother and sister.

The carriage drew up beside the crossing, while the party looked at the relaying of the railroad track with considerable interest.

Bob recognized the party at once and started to get out of their line of vision, but he wasn't quick enough.

Roscoe Sims recognized him and called Dexter's attention to him.

Dexter gave a snort of delight, for it had always been a source of dissatisfaction to his mean little nature that the boy he hated had managed to escape the fate he had mapped out for him.

At that moment came the shrill whistle of a down passenger train on the other track, and the locomotive appeared in sight around a curve a short distance away.

The spirited horses exhibited signs of restiveness at once, pawing the ground and tossing their heads.

Dexter pulled on the reins to quiet them, but his efforts had the contrary effect.

The animals took the bits in their teeth and suddenly started to cross the track in front of the approaching train.

Mrs. Drew uttered a cry of alarm, while her daughter gave a terrified shriek.

Bob at once saw the danger which menaced the party and sprang forward to try and avert the impending catastrophe.

As he did so Roscoe Sims jumped out of his seat and sought safety by the side of the road, and almost at the same moment Dexter, who was standing up, lost his balance and plunged forward over the dashboard.

"Save us! Save us!" shrieked Mrs. Drew, in a paroxysm of fear.

Bob seized the horses by their bridles and succeeded in pushing them clear of the train just as it whizzed by.

The cars passed so close to Miss Drew, who was cowering down on that side of the carriage, that she could have touched them with her hand.

As car after car went by the animals grew frantic with terror.

They backed about and plunged in their harness so vio-

lently that Bob was thrown from side to side, his heels twice striking one of the passing cars.

All the passengers either had their heads out of the windows, or were trying to look over those who had, and the greatest consternation and excitement ensued on the train.

Not one but held his or her breath in apprehension, expecting to see the wheels drawn against the cars and the carriage smashed to kindling wood.

Nothing of the kind occurred, fortunately, and in a moment the danger from that source had passed; but the way being now clear the horses fairly rode Bob down as they turned toward the track again, and, swerving around, dashed up along the sleepers at a terrible rate.

## CHAPTER XV.

### WITHIN AN INCH OF THEIR LIVES.

When the terrified horses started forward once more, in spite of his utmost endeavors to hold them, Bob saw that his only safety lay in swinging his feet up on the pole and clinging to it for dear life.

This he did while the animals were gaining headway in the frantic race up the track.

Mrs. Drew and her daughter were crying loudly for help, but none could reach them unless it came from the swinging Bob.

Bob knew there was an open trestle a short distance ahead, and if the carriage continued on the whole outfit would be sent whirling into the ravine at that point with a result that could only be extremely disastrous.

The urgency of immediate action put the boy on his mettle.

He squirmed around the pole between the swaying horses, and finally succeeded in getting himself upon it, which he only maintained with the greatest dexterity, while he grabbed the animals by their check reins and hauled back on them.

At first no apparent effect was produced on their speed, but little by little he began to get control of them.

But he had no time to lose, for the trestle was now right ahead.

He redoubled his exertions with a feverish intensity, for his own life, as well as the lives of the mother and daughter behind, were in jeopardy.

For several moments their fate hung quivering in the balance.

Then the horses gave in, and at last halted, shaking in every limb, at the very edge of the abyss that yawned before them.

Bob sprang down from his perch, and, taking the animals by their bridles again, led them carefully around until the team was made to face away from the peril.



Then he held the horses still, speaking soothingly to them, and calming down their excited fancy.

While he was doing this Mrs. Drew and her daughter jumped from the carriage, the latter fainting dead away as soon as her feet touched the ballast of the road.

Bob went to their assistance as soon as he felt he could leave the horses to themselves.

"My daughter has fainted," said Mrs. Drew, with white face and quivering lips.

Bob sprang down the embankment to a little rivulet which ran under the trestle and gathering up his two hands full of water returned to the spot where the unconscious girl reclined on her mother's knee and dashed the water into her face.

This operation he repeated several times until the girl came to herself.

Mrs. Drew uttered a sigh of thanksgiving.

"You are a brave boy, and have saved us from a terrible death at the risk of your own life. We can never thank you enough. Be sure we shall not forget the debt of gratitude we owe you. My husband will not be satisfied until he has expressed his feelings in a suitable and substantial way."

"You need feel under no obligations to me, Mrs. Drew. You are welcome to the service I have rendered you," replied Bob, with dignity.

"You seem to know me, young man. And now that I look at you again your features appear to be familiar to me. Will you tell me your name?"

"Mother," cried Clara Drew, with a quick look at their rescuer, "I know him. It is Bob Baxter, the boy who ran away from Bedford more than a year ago."

"Is it possible? Are you Robert Baxter? You seem greatly changed."

"Yes, Mrs. Drew, I am Bob Baxter, who was falsely accused by the squire, your husband, of blowing up his gas plant. I ran away from the village because I saw no chance of proving my innocence, and I did not want to go to prison for a term of years—a fate that would have blasted my reputation for life."

"Well, you need have no fear that Squire Drew will prosecute you for the act, even if you were guilty, after what you have done for us this day."

"That would not satisfy me, Mrs. Drew. I am resting under a cloud in the village where I lived so many years, and until that cloud is lifted I shall not be happy."

"Then let me assure you that I will see that my husband makes every effort to right you."

"I am afraid he never will do that, ma'am, because I have reason to believe that your son, who has long disliked me, aided by Roscoe Sims, his friend, are responsible for the crime I have been accused of."

"You astonish me. It does not seem possible that Dexter would stoop to injure any one, especially when it was a question of destroying his father's property."

"I agree with you that it does not seem as if a boy would do such a thing, but Roscoe admitted to me, under

compulsion I'll not deny, that Dexter took my powder can, which was the incriminating evidence produced against me, from a shelf in my uncle's store where I had left it, and used the contents to accomplish his object. Then he placed the empty can, which bore my name, where his father easily found it, and upon that he procured my arrest."

"I shall be very sorry to find out that what you say is the truth. It will grieve me exceedingly. But still justice must be done you, Robert Baxter, at any cost to our feelings, for I should never rest easy after this if you were permitted to suffer from an act of injustice on the part of a member of my family."

"If Dexter could be brought to acknowledge the part he took in the affair it is all I ask you to do in return for my exertions in your behalf this afternoon. I could then return without fear of disgrace to Bedford."

"I will talk to my husband about this matter. My son will have to tell the truth. I will see that you are relieved of all blame."

"Thank you, Mrs. Drew," replied Bob. "Shall I help you and Miss Drew into the carriage?"

The lady looked a bit doubtfully at the team.

"Are the horses over their fright?"

"Yes, ma'am. I will drive you as far as the crossing, where doubtless we shall find Dexter and his friend Sims."

Mrs. Drew and her daughter permitted Bob to hand them into the carriage.

He got on the front seat himself and drove slowly and carefully back to the crossing, where the trouble had started.

Dexter was lying down in the grass, not having yet recovered from the severe shaking up he had received when he fell out of the vehicle, and Sims was talking to him.

Bob turned the horses down into the road which led to Bedford, dismounted and tied them to a tree.

"Your mother and sister are waiting for you," he said, a bit coldly, to Dexter.

Young Drew looked at him a moment without speaking.

"Did you stop the carriage?" he asked at last.

"I did," replied Bob.

"How far did it go?"

"To the edge of the trestle across the ravine."

"You must have saved my mother's life, then, and also my sister?"

"I did."

"And you pulled the team out of the way of the train here, didn't you, after I fell out?"

Bob nodded.

"That settles it. I've hated you like fun, Bob Baxter, and tried my best to do you up. When I saw you bossing this gang of men here I meant to have you arrested as soon as I could send the Constable from the village. But it's all over now. You've got the best of me, and I might as well make a clean breast of everything to the governor. I blew up the gas plant myself, and I tried to fix the blame on you."



"I don't see what I ever did against you that you should have it in for me so hard."

"It don't matter now why I was down on you, but I was. But that's all over now. I'll tell my father the whole story and that will let you out of your fix."

"If you do that I'm satisfied."

"I'll do it all right. I wish you'd help Roscoe get me into the carriage. I've hurt one of my legs badly, and I've got a pain in the side. The governor will pay you well for what you've done for my mother and sister."

"Will he?" replied Bob, with a half indignant flush. "I guess not. I'm not taking any pay for doing what was nothing more than my duty."

"You're different from most fellows, I guess."

"Maybe I am, if it's a question of taking money for doing the right thing."

By this time Bob and Sims had got the injured Dexter over to the carriage.

"Are you hurt, my son?" asked Mrs. Drew, anxiously.

"Yes, ma, I am."

"Then you're in no condition to drive us home?"

"No, ma."

"Can you drive, Roscoe?" asked Mrs. Drew.

"I'd rather not," replied Sims, who hadn't got all over his fright yet.

"Then I suppose I will have to volunteer my services," put in Bob.

"I should be glad if you will do so," answered the squire's wife, with a look of relief.

So Bob, after giving certain directions to his gang of track layers, mounted to the front seat and started the carriage toward Bedford village.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### WINNING HIS WAY TO THE TOP.

"Drive at once to Doctor Warren's house," said Mrs. Drew, as they entered Main street.

As the carriage drove down the chief street in the village, nearly every one of the inhabitants who looked at the vehicle recognized Bob as the driver, and were greatly astonished to see him in that position.

Simply to see him once more in the village was quite a surprise of itself; but to discover him seated in the squire's carriage was something beyond their comprehension.

Dr. Warren was at home and Dexter was assisted out of the carriage and into his office.

"A fractured rib and a badly wrenched knee," was the doctor's verdict after he had examined the boy.

He did what he could for Dexter and then ordered that he be taken home and put to bed.

Bob accordingly drove the carriage to the Drew home, and turning the vehicle over to the coachman-gardener, said that he would have to return to the crossing at once.

"But surely you can wait a few minutes," said Mrs.

Drew, earnestly. "I expect my husband home any moment, and I wish you to see him. He will want to thank you for the priceless service you rendered my daughter and myself this afternoon, and will be much disappointed if this privilege is denied him."

"I would prefer not to meet Squire Drew until he is ready to clear me of the charge which hangs over my head. Your son has already admitted to me that he was responsible for the destruction of your gas plant, and has promised to have the matter set right."

"I am deeply mortified to know that Dexter has been the cause of you being compelled to leave the village. In saving my daughter and myself from certain death you have heaped coals of fire on our heads. You have returned good for evil. I blush to think what you have suffered on our account. I hope you will permit us not only to undo the misfortune we have brought upon you, but to make a fitting reparation. It is but right that we should make some public acknowledgment of the obligation you have placed us under by your brave and manly conduct to us in our hour of need."

While she was speaking Squire Drew came in at the gate.

A dark frown settled upon his face as his eyes rested on Bob.

"So, young man, you have come back, have you?" he began, in a disagreeable tone, when his wife stepped quickly up to him and laid her hand on his mouth.

"Conrad, you must not speak that way to Robert Baxter. He has just rendered us a service that you will never be able to sufficiently thank him for."

"What do you mean, Laura?" asked the nabob of Bedford village, astonished beyond measure.

"I mean this boy, whom I find we have deeply injured, for he is entirely innocent of the charge of destroying our gas plant, has saved my life, as well as our Clara's life, this afternoon."

"Saved your life and Clara's—this afternoon—Baxter has?"

"Yes, Conrad," she answered, and immediately put him in possession of the details of the desperate predicament from which she and her daughter had been rescued by Bob's presence of mind and bravery.

The squire listened like a man in a dream.

He could not doubt the truth when his own wife put it before him in so earnest and graphic a way.

Whatever he was to the rest of the world, he was a good husband and father, and Bob could not have made a greater impression on him by the act which conferred so great a service on those near and dear to him.

He felt humbled and humiliated before the boy he had injured, and for a moment he hardly knew what to say or how to act.

His wife seemed to understand his feelings and came to his rescue.

She took Bob by the hand and led him forward.

"My husband is unable to find words to express the



gratitude he feels toward you for what you have done today for us," she began when the squire found his tongue.

"Robert Baxter," he said, "my wife truly says that I cannot find words to fittingly acknowledge the great obligation under which you have placed us. Neither can I offer you a pecuniary reward, for the service you have rendered is beyond all monetary consideration, and the suggestion of such a thing could not but offend you. I trust, however, there is one thing I can offer you, and which I hope you will not refuse, and that is our friendship."

"I will accept it, Squire Drew, for I believe you will now do me the justice to publicly acknowledge that I am innocent of the crime of blowing up your gas plant. Your son Dexter is prepared to confess to you his agency in the affair, as well as the reasons which influenced him to do the deed."

"But the can with your name on it which I found in my grounds and which you acknowledged to be yours?"

"Was placed by Dexter so that you should find it."

"I can hardly believe that a son of mine would be guilty of such an act."

"It is for you to question him and find out for yourself. I am simply telling you what he acknowledged to me as soon as he realized I had saved the lives of his mother and sister. But for that service, which he cannot help but appreciate, it is probable he would not have spoken."

The squire insisted that Bob should stay to supper, and afterward remain at his house all night.

On the following morning the gardener-coachman drove him over to the scene of his duties on the railroad, while the squire himself wrote out and took to the editor of the village paper a full acknowledgment of the boy's innocence of the crime which had banished him from Bedford.

To this he added his grateful appreciation of the boy's bravery and presence of mind in the face of grave peril which had resulted in preserving the lives of his wife and daughter, thus publicly testifying to the value he now set upon Bob's character.

Now that he was fully vindicated, Bob took the first chance, which was the following Sunday, to visit Flossie Bates.

He was received with open arms.

Many of the good people of Bedford village met him during his brief visit and congratulated him on the change of front shown by Squire Drew.

The relaying of the double track between Middleditch and Beavertown was completed about the end of the next week, and then Bob and his gang of laborers returned to the yards at New York.

Bob regretted that circumstances prevented him from meeting Tom Leonard, whom he hadn't seen in over a year, but he made up for it in a measure by writing his old friend a good long letter.

As the months went by Bob Baxter continued to advance in the favorable notice of his superiors and to better positions on the road as an opening presented itself.

He was finally appointed foreman of the roundhouse, the youngest person who had ever held that position.

Here he gave great satisfaction, not only to the master mechanic but to the men under him as well, for he was strictly impartial in his dealing with such of the employees as came under his eye, and treated every one of them "white."

Soon after he reached his twenty-first birthday he was promoted to the responsible post of yardmaster, and soon after he was married to Flossie Bates at her parents' home in Bedford.

At twenty-five he was appointed master mechanic of the road, and to this piece of good fortune was added another.

The two houses which he had bought eight years before at a trifle less than \$6,000, and which had been gradually increasing in value, suddenly took a jump in the real estate market.

The extension of the underground railway system was completed to within a block of the street where the houses were situated, and as a consequence all the property in the neighborhood had a boom.

Bob decided to sell out when he found that the woods were full of buyers anxious to locate in that vicinity.

He asked a stiff price, \$25,000, for the two houses, and he got it.

About this time his uncle, Silas Oldham, died in Bedford village, and as he left no will and Bob was his only heir, the young master mechanic came in for a matter of \$20,000 in good money which the old man had been saving up from year to year out of the profits of his business.

Bob sold the store and its contents to Tom Leonard, who had been several years married to Ada Bates, of Middleditch, and Tom moved all his worldly possessions to Bedford and settled down there for an indefinite stay.

At thirty Bob became superintendent of the Hudson division of the New York, Buffalo & Chicago Railroad, and it is not at all improbable that some day he may reach the position of general manager of the road, for he stands well with the company from the president and directors down.

At any rate, he has his eye on that important and lucrative post, and in his own mind he feels certain of eventually "Winning His Way to the Top."

## THE END.

Read "BOSS OF THE MARKET; OR, THE GREATEST BOY IN WALL STREET," which will be the next number (41) of "Fame and Fortune Weekly."

SPECIAL NOTICE: All back numbers of this weekly are always in print. If you cannot obtain them from any newsdealer, send the price in money or postage stamps by mail to FRANK TOUSEY, PUBLISHER, 24 UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK, and you will receive the copies you order by return mail.



# WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY

A COMPLETE STORY EVERY WEEK

Price 5 Cents

BY THE BEST AUTHORS

Price 5 Cents

HANDSOME ILLUSTRATED COVERS

32-PAGES OF READING MATTER

ISSUED EVERY FRIDAY

Interesting Stories of Adventure in All Parts of the World

## TAKE NOTICE!

This handsome weekly contains intensely interesting stories of adventure on a great variety of subjects. Each number is replete with rousing situations and lively incidents. The heroes are bright, manly fellows, who overcome all obstacles by sheer force of brains and grit and win well-merited success. We have secured a staff of new authors, who write these stories in a manner which will be a source of pleasure and profit to the reader. Each number has a handsome colored illustration made by the most expert artists. Large sums of money are being spent to make this one of the best weeklies ever published.

### .....Here is a List of Some of the Titles.....

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 Smashing the Auto Record; or, Bart Wilson at the Speed Lever. By Edward N. Fox.    | 9 In the 'Frisco Earthquake; or, Bob Brag's Day of Terror. By Prof. Oliver Owens.      |
| 2 Off the Ticker; or, Fate at a Moment's Notice. By Tom Dawson.                      | 10 We, Us and Co.; or, Seeing Life With a Vaudeville Show. By Edward N. Fox.           |
| 3 From Cadet to Captain; or, Dick Danford's West Point Nerve. By Lieut. J. J. Barry. | 11 Cut Out for an Officer; or, Corporal Ted in the Philippines. By Lieut. J. J. Barry. |
| 4 The Get-There Boys; or, Making Things Hum in Honduras. By Fred Warburton.          | 12 A Fool for Luck; or, The Boy Who Turned Boss. By Fred Warburton.                    |
| 5 Written in Cipher; or, The Skein Jack Barry Unravelled. By Prof. Oliver Owens.     | 13 The Great Gaul "Beat"; or, Phil Winston's Start in Reporting. By A. Howard De Witt. |
| 6 The No-Good Boys; or, Downing a Tough Name. By A. Howard De Witt.                  | 14 Out for Gold; or, The Boy Who Knew the Difference. By Tom Dawson.                   |
| 7 Kicked off the Earth; or, Ted Trim's Hard Luck Cure. By Rob Roy.                   |  |
| 8 Doing It Quick; or, Ike Brown's Hustle at Panama. By Captain Hawthorn, U. S. N.    |  |

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by  
**FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.**

## IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our libraries, and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Cut out and fill in the following Order Blank and send it to us with the price of the books you want and we will send them to you by return mail.  
**POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.**

.....

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York. ....190

DEAR SIR— Enclosed find..... cents for which please send me:

....copies of FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY, Nos.....

.... " " WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY, Nos.....

.... " " WORK AND WIN, Nos.....

.... " " WILD WEST WEEKLY, Nos.....

.... " " PLUCK AND LUCK, Nos.....

.... " " SECRET SERVICE, Nos.....

.... " " THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76, Nos.....

.... " " Ten-Cent Hand Books, Nos.....

Name.....Street and No.....Town.....State.....



# These Books Tell You Everything!

## A COMPLETE SET IS A REGULAR ENCYCLOPEDIA!

Each book consists of sixty-four pages, printed on good paper, in clear type and neatly bound in an attractive, illustrated cover. Most of the books are also profusely illustrated, and all of the subjects treated upon are explained in such a simple manner that any child can thoroughly understand them. Look over the list as classified and see if you want to know anything about the subjects mentioned.

THESE BOOKS ARE FOR SALE BY ALL NEWSDEALERS OR WILL BE SENT BY MAIL TO ANY ADDRESS FROM THIS OFFICE ON RECEIPT OF PRICE, TEN CENTS EACH, OR ANY THREE BOOKS FOR TWENTY-FIVE CENTS. POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY. Address FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, N.Y.

### MESMERISM.

No. 81. HOW TO MESMERIZE.—Containing the most approved methods of mesmerism; also how to cure all kinds of diseases by animal magnetism, or, magnetic healing. By Prof. Leo Hugo Koch, A. C. S., author of "How to Hypnotize," etc.

### PALMISTRY.

No. 82. HOW TO DO PALMISTRY.—Containing the most approved methods of reading the lines on the hand, together with a full explanation of their meaning. Also explaining phrenology, and the key for telling character by the bumps on the head. By Leo Hugo Koch, A. C. S. Fully illustrated.

### HYPNOTISM.

No. 83. HOW TO HYPNOTIZE.—Containing valuable and instructive information regarding the science of hypnotism. Also explaining the most approved methods which are employed by the leading hypnotists of the world. By Leo Hugo Koch, A.C.S.

### SPORTING.

No. 21. HOW TO HUNT AND FISH.—The most complete hunting and fishing guide ever published. It contains full instructions about guns, hunting dogs, traps, trapping and fishing, together with descriptions of game and fish.

No. 26. HOW TO ROW, SAIL AND BUILD A BOAT.—Fully illustrated. Every boy should know how to row and sail a boat. Full instructions are given in this little book, together with instructions on swimming and riding, companion sports to boating.

No. 47. HOW TO BREAK, RIDE AND DRIVE A HORSE.—A complete treatise on the horse. Describing the most useful horses for business, the best horses for the road; also valuable recipes for diseases peculiar to the horse.

No. 48. HOW TO BUILD AND SAIL CANOES.—A handy book for boys, containing full directions for constructing canoes and the most popular manner of sailing them. Fully illustrated. By C. Stansfield Hicks.

### FORTUNE TELLING.

No. 1. NAPOLEON'S ORACULUM AND DREAM BOOK.—Containing the great oracle of human destiny; also the true meaning of almost any kind of dreams, together with charms, ceremonies, and curious games of cards. A complete book.

No. 23. HOW TO EXPLAIN DREAMS.—Everybody dreams, from the little child to the aged man and woman. This little book gives the explanation to all kinds of dreams, together with lucky and unlucky days, and "Napoleon's Oraculum," the book of fate.

No. 28. HOW TO TELL FORTUNES.—Everyone is desirous of knowing what his future life will bring forth, whether happiness or misery, wealth or poverty. You can tell by a glance at this little book. Buy one and be convinced. Tell your own fortune. Tell the fortune of your friends.

No. 76. HOW TO TELL FORTUNES BY THE HAND.—Containing rules for telling fortunes by the aid of lines of the hand, or the secret of palmistry. Also the secret of telling future events by aid of moles, marks, scars, etc. Illustrated. By A. Anderson.

### ATHLETIC.

No. 6. HOW TO BECOME AN ATHLETE.—Giving full instruction for the use of dumb bells, Indian clubs, parallel bars, horizontal bars and various other methods of developing a good, healthy muscle; containing over sixty illustrations. Every boy can become strong and healthy by following the instructions contained in this little book.

No. 10. HOW TO BOX.—The art of self-defense made easy. Containing over thirty illustrations of guards, blows, and the different positions of a good boxer. Every boy should obtain one of these useful and instructive books, as it will teach you how to box without an instructor.

No. 25. HOW TO BECOME A GYMNAST.—Containing full instructions for all kinds of gymnastic sports and athletic exercises. Embracing thirty-five illustrations. By Professor W. Macdonald. A handy and useful book.

No. 34. HOW TO FENCE.—Containing full instruction for fencing and the use of the broadsword; also instruction in archery. Described with twenty-one practical illustrations, giving the best positions in fencing. A complete book.

### TRICKS WITH CARDS.

No. 51. HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Containing explanations of the general principles of sleight-of-hand applicable to card tricks; of card tricks with ordinary cards, and not requiring sleight-of-hand; of tricks involving sleight-of-hand, or the use of specially prepared cards. By Professor Haffner. Illustrated.

No. 72. HOW TO DO SIXTY TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Embracing all of the latest and most deceptive card tricks, with illustrations. By A. Anderson.

No. 77. HOW TO DO FORTY TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Containing deceptive Card Tricks as performed by leading conjurors and magicians. Arranged for home amusement. Fully illustrated.

### MAGIC.

No. 2. HOW TO DO TRICKS.—The great book of magic and card tricks, containing full instruction on all the leading card tricks of the day, also the most popular magical illusions as performed by our leading magicians; every boy should obtain a copy of this book, as it will both amuse and instruct.

No. 22. HOW TO DO SECOND SIGHT.—Heller's second sight explained by his former assistant, Fred Hunt, Jr. Explaining how the secret dialogues were carried on between the magician and the boy on the stage; also giving all the codes and signals. The only authentic explanation of second sight.

No. 43. HOW TO BECOME A MAGICIAN.—Containing the grandest assortment of magical illusions ever placed before the public. Also tricks with cards, incantations, etc.

No. 68. HOW TO DO CHEMICAL TRICKS.—Containing over one hundred highly amusing and instructive tricks with chemicals. By A. Anderson. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 69. HOW TO DO SLEIGHT OF HAND.—Containing over fifty of the latest and best tricks used by magicians. Also containing the secret of second sight. Fully illustrated. By A. Anderson.

No. 70. HOW TO MAKE MAGIC TOYS.—Containing full directions for making Magic Toys and devices of many kinds. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.

No. 73. HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH NUMBERS.—Showing many curious tricks with figures and the magic of numbers. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.

No. 75. HOW TO BECOME A CONJUROR.—Containing tricks with Dominoes, Dice, Cups and Balls, Hats, etc. Embracing thirty-six illustrations. By A. Anderson.

No. 78. HOW TO DO THE BLACK ART.—Containing a complete description of the mysteries of Magic and Sleight of Hand, together with many wonderful experiments. By A. Anderson. Illustrated.

### MECHANICAL.

No. 29. HOW TO BECOME AN INVENTOR.—Every boy should know how inventions originated. This book explains them all, giving examples in electricity, hydraulics, magnetism, optics, pneumatics, mechanics, etc. The most instructive book published.

No. 56. HOW TO BECOME AN ENGINEER.—Containing full instructions how to proceed in order to become a locomotive engineer; also directions for building a model locomotive; together with a full description of everything an engineer should know.

No. 57. HOW TO MAKE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.—Full directions how to make a Banjo, Violin, Zither, Aeolian Harp, Xylophone and other musical instruments; together with a brief description of nearly every musical instrument used in ancient or modern times. Profusely illustrated. By Algernon S. Fitzgerald, for twenty years bandmaster of the Royal Bengal Marines.

No. 59. HOW TO MAKE A MAGIC LANTERN.—Containing a description of the lantern, together with its history and invention. Also full directions for its use and for painting slides. Handsomely illustrated. By John Allen.

No. 71. HOW TO DO MECHANICAL TRICKS.—Containing complete instructions for performing over sixty Mechanical Tricks. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.

### LETTER WRITING.

No. 11. HOW TO WRITE LOVE-LETTERS.—A most complete little book, containing full directions for writing love-letters, and when to use them, giving specimen letters for young and old.

No. 12. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS TO LADIES.—Giving complete instructions for writing letters to ladies on all subjects; also letters of introduction, notes and requests.

No. 24. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS TO GENTLEMEN.—Containing full directions for writing to gentlemen on all subjects; also giving sample letters for instruction.

No. 53. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS.—A wonderful little book, telling you how to write to your sweetheart, your father, mother, sister, brother, employer; and, in fact, everybody and anybody you wish to write to. Every young man and every young lady in the land should have this book.

No. 74. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS CORRECTLY.—Containing full instructions for writing letters on almost any subject; also rules for punctuation and composition, with specimen letters.



## THE STAGE.

No. 41. **THE BOYS OF NEW YORK END MEN'S JOKE BOOK.**—Containing a great variety of the latest jokes used by the most famous end men. No amateur minstrels is complete without this wonderful little book.

No. 42. **THE BOYS OF NEW YORK STUMP SPEAKER.**—Containing a varied assortment of stump speeches, Negro, Dutch and Irish. Also end men's jokes. Just the thing for home amusement and amateur shows.

No. 45. **THE BOYS OF NEW YORK MINSTREL GUIDE AND JOKE BOOK.**—Something new and very instructive. Every boy should obtain this book, as it contains full instructions for organizing an amateur minstrel troupe.

No. 65. **MULDOON'S JOKES.**—This is one of the most original joke books ever published, and it is brimful of wit and humor. It contains a large collection of songs, jokes, conundrums, etc., of Terrence Muldoon, the great wit, humorist, and practical joker of the day. Every boy who can enjoy a good substantial joke should obtain a copy immediately.

No. 79. **HOW TO BECOME AN ACTOR.**—Containing complete instructions how to make up for various characters on the stage; together with the duties of the Stage Manager, Prompter, Scenic Artist and Property Man. By a prominent Stage Manager.

No. 80. **GUS WILLIAMS' JOKE BOOK.**—Containing the latest jokes, anecdotes, and funny stories of this world-renowned and ever popular German comedian. Sixty-four pages; handsome colored cover containing a half-tone photo of the author.

## HOUSEKEEPING.

No. 16. **HOW TO KEEP A WINDOW GARDEN.**—Containing full instructions for constructing a window garden either in town or country, and the most approved methods for raising beautiful flowers at home. The most complete book of the kind ever published.

No. 30. **HOW TO COOK.**—One of the most instructive books on cooking ever published. It contains recipes for cooking meats, fish, game, and oysters; also pies, puddings, cakes and all kinds of pastry, and a grand collection of recipes by one of our most popular cooks.

No. 37. **HOW TO KEEP HOUSE.**—It contains information for everybody, boys, girls, men and women; it will teach you how to make almost anything around the house, such as parlor ornaments, brackets, cements, Aeolian harps, and bird lime for catching birds.

## ELECTRICAL.

No. 46. **HOW TO MAKE AND USE ELECTRICITY.**—A description of the wonderful uses of electricity and electro magnetism; together with full instructions for making Electric Toys, Batteries, etc. By George Trebel, A. M., M. D. Containing over fifty illustrations.

No. 64. **HOW TO MAKE ELECTRICAL MACHINES.**—Containing full directions for making electrical machines, induction coils, dynamos, and many novel toys to be worked by electricity. By R. A. R. Bennett. Fully illustrated.

No. 67. **HOW TO DO ELECTRICAL TRICKS.**—Containing a large collection of instructive and highly amusing electrical tricks, together with illustrations. By A. Anderson.

## ENTERTAINMENT.

No. 9. **HOW TO BECOME A VENTRILOQUIST.**—By Harry Kennedy. The secret given away. Every intelligent boy reading this book of instructions, by a practical professor (delighting multitudes every night with his wonderful imitations), can master the art, and create any amount of fun for himself and friends. It is the greatest book ever published, and there's millions (of fun) in it.

No. 20. **HOW TO ENTERTAIN AN EVENING PARTY.**—A very valuable little book just published. A complete compendium of games, sports, card diversions, comic recitations, etc., suitable for parlor or drawing-room entertainment. It contains more for the money than any book published.

No. 35. **HOW TO PLAY GAMES.**—A complete and useful little book, containing the rules and regulations of billiards, bagatelle, backgammon, croquet, dominoes, etc.

No. 36. **HOW TO SOLVE CONUNDRUMS.**—Containing all the leading conundrums of the day, amusing riddles, curious catches and witty sayings.

No. 52. **HOW TO PLAY CARDS.**—A complete and handy little book, giving the rules and full directions for playing Euchre, Cribbage, Casino, Forty-Five, Rounce, Pedro Sancho, Draw Poker, Auction Pitch, All Fours, and many other popular games of cards.

No. 66. **HOW TO DO PUZZLES.**—Containing over three hundred interesting puzzles and conundrums, with key to same. A complete book. Fully illustrated. By A. Anderson.

## ETIQUETTE.

No. 13. **HOW TO DO IT; OR, BOOK OF ETIQUETTE.**—It is a great life secret, and one that every young man desires to know all about. There's happiness in it.

No. 33. **HOW TO BEHAVE.**—Containing the rules and etiquette of good society and the easiest and most approved methods of appearing to good advantage at parties, balls, the theatre, church, and in the drawing-room.

## DECLAMATION.

No. 27. **HOW TO RECITE AND BOOK OF RECITATIONS.**—Containing the most popular selections in use, comprising Dutch dialect, French dialect, Yankee and Irish dialect pieces, together with many standard readings.

No. 31. **HOW TO BECOME A SPEAKER.**—Containing fourteen illustrations, giving the different positions requisite to become a good speaker, reader and elocutionist. Also containing gems from all the popular authors of prose and poetry, arranged in the most simple and concise manner possible.

No. 49. **HOW TO DEBATE.**—Giving rules for conducting debates, outlines for debates, questions for discussion, and the best sources for procuring information on the questions given.

## SOCIETY.

No. 3. **HOW TO FLIRT.**—The arts and wiles of flirtation are fully explained by this little book. Besides the various methods of handkerchief, fan, glove, parasol, window and hat flirtation, it contains a full list of the language and sentiment of flowers, which is interesting to everybody, both old and young. You cannot be happy without one.

No. 4. **HOW TO DANCE** is the title of a new and handsome little book just issued by Frank Tousey. It contains full instructions in the art of dancing, etiquette in the ball-room and at parties, how to dress, and full directions for calling off in all popular square dances.

No. 5. **HOW TO MAKE LOVE.**—A complete guide to love, courtship and marriage, giving sensible advice, rules and etiquette to be observed, with many curious and interesting things not generally known.

No. 17. **HOW TO DRESS.**—Containing full instruction in the art of dressing and appearing well at home and abroad, giving the selections of colors, material, and how to have them made up.

No. 18. **HOW TO BECOME BEAUTIFUL.**—One of the brightest and most valuable little books ever given to the world. Everybody wishes to know how to become beautiful, both male and female. The secret is simple, and almost costless. Read this book and be convinced how to become beautiful.

## BIRDS AND ANIMALS.

No. 7. **HOW TO KEEP BIRDS.**—Handsomely illustrated and containing full instructions for the management and training of the canary, mockingbird, bobolink, blackbird, parrot, parrot, etc.

No. 39. **HOW TO RAISE DOGS, POULTRY, PIGEONS AND RABBITS.**—A useful and instructive book. Handsomely illustrated. By Ira Drofraw.

No. 40. **HOW TO MAKE AND SET TRAPS.**—Including hints on how to catch moles, weasels, otter, rats, squirrels and birds. Also how to cure skins. Copiously illustrated. By J. Harrington Keene.

No. 50. **HOW TO STUFF BIRDS AND ANIMALS.**—A valuable book, giving instructions in collecting, preparing, mounting and preserving birds, animals and insects.

No. 54. **HOW TO KEEP AND MANAGE PETS.**—Giving complete information as to the manner and method of raising, keeping, taming, breeding, and managing all kinds of pets; also giving full instructions for making cages, etc. Fully explained by twenty-eight illustrations, making it the most complete book of the kind ever published.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

No. 8. **HOW TO BECOME A SCIENTIST.**—A useful and instructive book, giving a complete treatise on chemistry; also experiments in acoustics, mechanics, mathematics, chemistry, and directions for making fireworks, colored fires, and gas balloons. This book cannot be equaled.

No. 14. **HOW TO MAKE CANDY.**—A complete hand-book for making all kinds of candy, ice-cream, syrup, essences, etc., etc.

No. 84. **HOW TO BECOME AN AUTHOR.**—Containing full information regarding choice of subjects, the use of words and the manner of preparing and submitting manuscript. Also containing valuable information as to the neatness, legibility and general composition of manuscript, essential to a successful author. By Prince Hiland.

No. 38. **HOW TO BECOME YOUR OWN DOCTOR.**—A wonderful book, containing useful and practical information in the treatment of ordinary diseases and ailments common to every family. Abounding in useful and effective recipes for general complaints.

No. 55. **HOW TO COLLECT STAMPS AND COINS.**—Containing valuable information regarding the collecting and arranging of stamps and coins. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 58. **HOW TO BE A DETECTIVE.**—By Old King Brady, the world-known detective. In which he lays down some valuable and sensible rules for beginners, and also relates some adventures and experiences of well-known detectives.

No. 60. **HOW TO BECOME A PHOTOGRAPHER.**—Containing useful information regarding the Camera and how to work it; also how to make Photographic Magic Lantern Slides and other Transparencies. Handsomely illustrated. By Captain W. De W. Abney.

No. 62. **HOW TO BECOME A WEST POINT MILITARY CADET.**—Containing full explanations how to gain admittance, course of Study, Examinations, Duties, Staff of Officers, Post Guard, Police Regulations, Fire Department, and all a boy should know to be a Cadet. Compiled and written by Lu Senarens, author of "How to Become a Naval Cadet."

No. 63. **HOW TO BECOME A NAVAL CADET.**—Complete instructions of how to gain admission to the Annapolis Naval Academy. Also containing the course of instruction, description of grounds and buildings, historical sketch, and everything a boy should know to become an officer in the United States Navy. Compiled and written by Lu Senarens, author of "How to Become a West Point Military Cadet."

**PRICE 10 CENTS EACH, OR 3 FOR 25 CENTS.**

**Address FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.**



# WORK AND WIN.

The Best Weekly Published.

**ALL THE NUMBERS ARE ALWAYS IN PRINT.**

**READ ONE AND YOU WILL READ THEM ALL.**

## LATEST ISSUES:

- 326 Fred Fearnot and the Bank Messenger; or, The Boy Who Made a Fortune.  
327 Fred Fearnot and the Kentucky Moonshiners; or, The "Bad" Men of the Blue Grass Region.  
328 Fred Fearnot and the Boy Acrobat; or, Out With His Own Circus.  
329 Fred Fearnot's Great Crash; or, Losing His Fortune in Wall Street.  
330 Fred Fearnot's Return to Athletics; or, His Start to Regain a Fortune.  
331 Fred Fearnot's Fencing Team; or, Defeating the "Pride of Old Eli."  
332 Fred Fearnot's "Free For All"; or, His Great Indoor Meet.  
333 Fred Fearnot and the Cabin Boy; or, Beating the Steamboat Sharpers.  
334 Fred Fearnot and the Prize-Fighter; or, A Pugilist's Awful Mistake.  
335 Fred Fearnot's Office Boy; or, Making Money in Wall Street.  
336 Fred Fearnot as a Fireman; or, The Boy Hero of the Flames.  
337 Fred Fearnot and the Factory Boy; or, The Champion of the Town.  
338 Fred Fearnot and the "Bad Man"; or, The Bluff from Bitter Creek.  
339 Fred Fearnot and the Shop Girl; or, The Plot Against An Orphan.  
340 Fred Fearnot Among the Mexicans; or, Evelyn and the Brigands.  
341 Fred Fearnot and the Boy Engineer; or, Beating the Train Wreckers.  
342 Fred Fearnot and the "Hornets"; or, The League that Sought to Down Him.  
343 Fred Fearnot and the Cheeky Dude; or, A Shallow Youth from Brooklyn.  
344 Fred Fearnot in a Death Trap; or, Lost in The Mammoth Caves.  
345 Fred Fearnot and the Boy Rancher; or, The Gamest Lad in Texas.  
346 Fred Fearnot and the Stage Driver; or, The Man Who Understood Horses.  
347 Fred Fearnot's Change of Front; or, Staggering the Wall Street Brokers.  
348 Fred Fearnot's New Ranch, And How He and Terry Managed It.  
349 Fred Fearnot and the Lariat Thrower; or, Beating the Champion of the West.  
350 Fred Fearnot and the Swindling Trustee; or, Saving a Widow's Little Fortune.  
351 Fred Fearnot and the "Wild" Cowboys, And the Fun He Had With Them.  
352 Fred Fearnot and the "Money Queen"; or, Exposing a Female Sharpener.  
353 Fred Fearnot's Boy Pard; or, Striking it Rich in the Hills.  
354 Fred Fearnot and the Railroad Gang; or, A Desperate Fight for Life.  
355 Fred Fearnot and the Mad Miner; or, The Gold Thieves of the Rockies.  
356 Fred Fearnot in Trouble; or, Terry Olcott's Vow of Vengeance.  
357 Fred Fearnot and the Girl in White; or, The Mystery of the Steamboat.  
358 Fred Fearnot and the Boy Herder; or, The Masked Band of the Plains.  
359 Fred Fearnot in Hard Luck; or, Roughing it in the Silver Diggings.  
360 Fred Fearnot and the Indian Guide; or, The Abduction of a Beautiful Girl.  
361 Fred Fearnot's Search for Terry, and Terry's Faith in Him.  
362 Fred Fearnot and the Temperance Man; or, Putting Down the Rum Sellers.  
363 Fred Fearnot's Fight for his Life; or, The Cunning that Pulled Him Through.  
364 Fred Fearnot and the Wild Beast Tamer; or, A Week With a Circus.  
365 Fred Fearnot and the Fiddlers' Convention; or, The Music that Puzzled the Musicians.  
366 Fred Fearnot's Wall Street Game; or, Beating the Brokers.  
367 Fred Fearnot and the Wild Mustang; or A Chase of Thirty Days.  
368 Fred Fearnot and the Boasting Cowboy; or, Teaching a Braggart a Lesson.  
369 Fred Fearnot and the School Boy; or, The Brightest Lad in New York.  
370 Fred Fearnot's Game Teamster; or, A Hot Time on the Plains.  
371 Fred Fearnot and the Renegade; or, The Man Who Defied Bullets.  
372 Fred Fearnot and the Poor Boy; or, The Dime that Made a Fortune.  
373 Fred Fearnot's Treasure Hunt! or, After the Aztec's Gold.  
374 Fred Fearnot and the Cowboy King; or, Evelyn and the "Bad" Men.  
375 Fred Fearnot and "Ro ring Bill"; or, The Wickedest Boy in the West.  
376 Fred Fearnot and the Boy Prospector; or, The Secret Band of Indian Gulch.  
377 Fred Fearnot and the Banker's Boy; or, The Lad Who Cornered the Market.  
378 Fred Fearnot and the Boy of Grit; or, Forcing His Way to the Top.  
379 Fred Fearnot and the Diamond Queen; or, Helping the Treasury Department.  
380 Fred Fearnot and the White Masks; or, Chasing the Chicago Stranglers.  
381 Fred Fearnot at Sandy-Licks; or, Taming a "Bad" Man.  
382 Fred Fearnot and the Drunkard's Son; or, A Hot Fight Against Rum.  
383 Fred Fearnot and the Snake-Charmer; or, Out With the Circus Fakirs.  
384 Fred Fearnot's Pony Express; or, A Rough Ride in Texas.  
385 Fred Fearnot Held Back; or, The Time Terry Failed Him.  
386 Fred Fearnot and the Tough Trio; or, Keeping the Peace at Gold Bar.  
387 Fred Fearnot and "Nobody's Boy"; or, Helping Along an Orphan.  
388 Fred Fearnot's Promise; or, Helping a Drunkard's Boy.  
389 Fred Fearnot and the Hunted Man; or, Solving a Queer Mystery.  
390 Fred Fearnot and the Girl of Gold; or, The Female "Wizard" of Wall Street.  
391 Fred Fearnot and Uncle Josh; or, Saving the Old Homestead.  
392 Fred Fearnot and "Long Luke"; or, The Toughest Man in Texas.  
393 Fred Fearnot on the Diamond; or, Playing Pennant Ball.  
394 Fred Fearnot and the Silver Syndicate; or, Beating the Wall Street Sharks.  
395 Fred Fearnot's Conquering Stroke; or, Winning the Silver Sculls.  
396 Fred Fearnot's Summer Camp; or, Hunting in the North Woods.  
397 Fred Fearnot's Baseball Boys; or, Playing in the League.

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by

**FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher,**

**24 Union Square, New York.**

## IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our Libraries and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Cut out and fill in the following Order Blank and send it to us with the price of the books you want and we will send them to you by return mail.

**POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.**

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York. ....190

DEAR SIR—Enclosed find.....cents for which please send me:

- ....copies of WORK AND WIN, Nos.....  
.... " " WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY, Nos.....  
.... " " WILD WEST WEEKLY, Nos.....  
.... " " THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76, Nos.....  
.... " " PLUCK AND LUCK, Nos.....  
.... " " SECRET SERVICE, Nos.....  
.... " " FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY, Nos.....  
.... " " Ten-Cent Hand Books, Nos.....

Name.....Street and No.....Town.....State.....



# Fame and Fortune Weekly

## STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

By A SELF-MADE MAN

32 Pages of Reading Matter

: :

Handsome Colored Covers

A NEW ONE ISSUED EVERY FRIDAY

PRICE 5 CENTS A COPY

This Weekly contains interesting stories of smart boys, who win fame and fortune by their ability to take advantage of passing opportunities. Some of these stories are founded on true incidents in the lives of our most successful self-made men, and show how a boy of pluck, perseverance and brains can become famous and wealthy. Every one of this series contains a good moral tone which makes "Fame and Fortune Weekly" a magazine for the home, although each number is replete with exciting adventures. The stories are the very best obtainable, the illustrations are by expert artists, and every effort is constantly being made to make it the best weekly on the news stands. Tell your friends about it.

### ALREADY PUBLISHED.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 A Lucky Deal; or, The Cutest Boy in Wall Street.             | 21 All to the Good; or, From Call Boy to Manager.                  |
| 2 Born to Good Luck; or, The Boy Who Succeeded.                | 22 How He Got There; or, The Pluckiest Boy of Them All.            |
| 3 A Corner in Corn; or, How a Chicago Boy Did the Trick        | 23 Bound to Win; or, The Boy Who Got Rich.                         |
| 4 A Game of Chance; or, The Boy Who Won Out.                   | 24 Pushing It Through; or, The Fate of a Lucky Boy.                |
| 5 Hard to Beat; or, The Cleverest Boy in Wall Street.          | 25 A Born Speculator; or, the Young Sphinx of Wall Street.         |
| 6 Building a Railroad; or, The Young Contractors of Lake-view. | 26 The Way to Success; or, The Boy Who Got There.                  |
| 7 Winning His Way; or, The Youngest Editor in Green River.     | 27 Struck Oil; or, The Boy Who Made a Million.                     |
| 8 The Wheel of Fortune; or, The Record of a Self-Made Boy.     | 28 A Golden Risk; or, The Young Miners of Della Cruz.              |
| 9 Nip and Tuck; or, The Young Brokers of Wall Street.          | 29 A Sure Winner; or, The Boy Who Went Out With a Circus.          |
| 10 A Copper Harvest; or, The Boys Who Worked a Deserted Mine.  | 30 Golden Fleece; or, The Boy Brokers of Wall Street.              |
| 11 A Lucky Penny; or, The Fortunes of a Boston Boy.            | 31 A Mad Cap Scheme; or, The Boy Treasure Hunters of Cocos Island. |
| 12 A Diamond in the Rough; or, A Brave Boys Start in Life.     | 32 Adrift on the World; or, Working His Way to Fortune.            |
| 13 Baiting the Bears; or, The Nerviest Boy in Wall Street.     | 33 Playing to Win; or, The Foxiest Boy in Wall Street.             |
| 14 A Gold Brick; or, The Boy Who Could Not be Downed.          | 34 Tatters; or, A Boy from the Slums.                              |
| 15 A Streak of Luck; or, The Boy Who Feathered His Nest        | 35 A Young Monte Cristo; or, The Richest Boy in the World.         |
| 16 A Good Thing; or, The Boy Who Made a Fortune.               | 36 Won by Pluck; or, The Boys Who Ran a Railroad.                  |
| 17 King of the Market; or, The Youngest Trader in Wall Street. | 37 Beating the Brokers; or, The Boy Who "Couldn't be Done."        |
| 18 Pure Grit; or, One Boy in a Thousand.                       | 38 A Rolling Stone; or, The Brightest Boy on Record.               |
| 19 A Rise in Life; or, The Career of a Factory Boy.            | 39 Never Say Die; or, The Young Surveyor of Happy Valley.          |
| 20 A Barrel of Money; or, A Bright Boy in Wall Street.         | 40 Almost a Man; or, Winning His Way to the Top.                   |

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by

**FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher,**

**24 Union Square, New York.**

### IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our Libraries and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Cut out and fill in the following Order Blank and send it to us with the price of the books you want and we will send them to you by return mail.

**POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.**

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York. ....190

DEAR SIR—Enclosed find.....cents for which please send me:

....copies of WORK AND WIN, Nos.....

.... " " THE WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY, Nos.....

.... " " WILD WEST WEEKLY, Nos.....

.... " " THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76, Nos.....

.... " " PLUCK AND LUCK, Nos.....

.... " " SECRET SERVICE, Nos.....

.... " " FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY, Nos.....

.... " " Ten-Cent Hand Books, Nos.....

Name.....Street and No.....Town.....State.....